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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AND THE

DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD.





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AND THE

DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD

BY THE

MARQUIS DE BELLOY

*Auguste Belloy
Translated by R. S. Hunter*

WITH SIX ETCHINGS AND FIFTY-ONE ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD

DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED BY LEOPOLD FLAMENG



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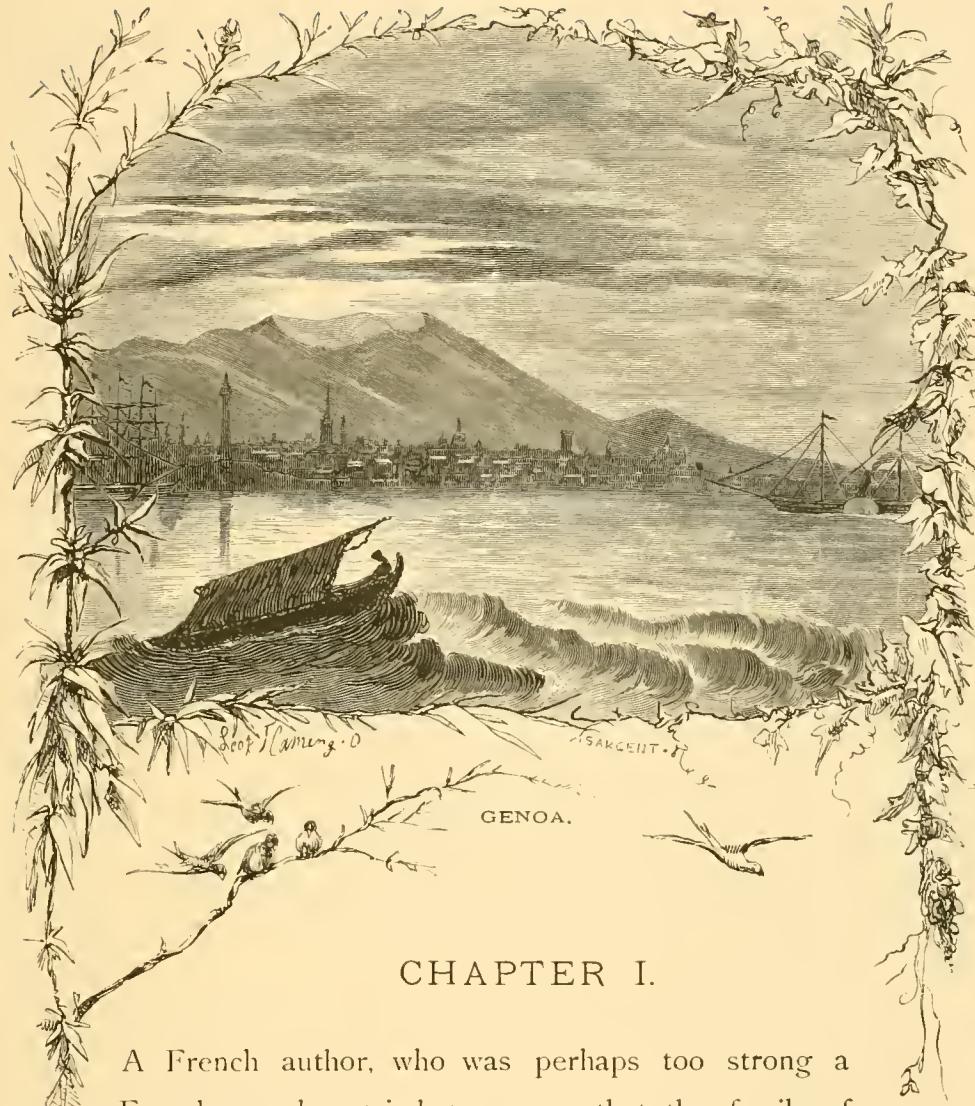
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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.



CHAPTER I.

A French author, who was perhaps too strong a Frenchman, has tried to prove that the family of Christopher Columbus was of French descent. Such a patriotic assertion I have no wish to contradict; it even seems to me plausible; but I am bound to confess that no writer of authority has given it his support.

However this may be, our hero's family had long been settled in the State of Genoa at the time of his birth. He was the eldest

son of Dominic Columbus, a manufacturer of silk goods; his mother's maiden name was Susanna Fontanarossa. He had three younger brothers, Bartholomew and James (Giacomo), who figure prominently in the history of his life, and Pellegrino, who followed his father's business, and died young. Columbus had also a sister, of whom we know nothing but that she married a dealer in potted meats (*charcutier*) named Giacomo Bavarello.

Both the time and the place of Columbus' birth have given occasion to long and learned discussions. Whatever doubt may attach to the former, we must accept as to the latter the testimony of Columbus himself in his will. In this authentic and carefully worded document, he solemnly declares himself born at Genoa, of Genoese parents. In spite of this formal declaration, a number of cities and villages, both in the Montferrat and Plaisantin districts, and in the Riviera of Genoa, still dispute for the honor of his birth. The maritime village of Gogoleto or Cogoreto, a little way from Genoa, shows with pride the hovel where he first saw the light. But the best writers have finished, where they might better have begun, by agreeing with Columbus himself in fixing his birth in the city of Genoa, about the year 1436.

The situation of his family was at this time neither so humble nor altogether so impoverished as might be inferred from some of the preceding details. Though reduced in circumstances, they belonged to the *noblesse*. Of this there are many proofs. It is well known, moreover, that in most of the Italian Republics, republics at once mercantile and warlike, no labor, whether of brain, eye or hand, was regarded with the slightest disfavor, if only it were honest and skilful. Just as, at Florence, a gentleman could, without derogation from his rank, be a silk manufacturer, so at Genoa a cloth maker (*tentor pan-*

norum) could, without exciting surprise, emblazon his coat of arms on his shop-front.

We enter into these details once for all, because Columbus himself attached some importance to them, even at a time of his life when his noble birth could add nothing to his popularity and good fortune. In a letter to the nurse of the little Don Juan, he says in reference to Colon el Mozo, reputed to be his relation, "Let them call me what they will, I am not the first Admiral of my family. David the wise king kept sheep, and afterwards he was King of Jerusalem. I serve the same God who exalted David."

Later, Ferdinand, in the life which he wrote of his illustrious father, was a little less positive. It was enough for him that Columbus was the greatest admiral in the world; and while confessing that his relationship with El Mozo had not been authentically proved, he added, "I think there is more glory for us in descending from the Admiral our father, than in inquiring whether our grandfather kept a shop."

However this may be, Dominic owned two houses in Genoa, whose location is well known, and in one of which we have every reason to believe that his eldest son was born. He had also a little landed patrimony in the valley of the Nura, and several small properties in the neighborhood of Quinto. He was able, therefore, to give his sons a rudimentary education, without which the eldest could never have conceived the idea of his immortal enterprise, nor the two younger have rendered him such effectual assistance.

Let us add here, for our readers' satisfaction, that the good father lived long enough to rejoice in the glorious result of these early years of training; a result more magnificent, no doubt, than he had ever dreamed of, but due in great part to his judicious affection.

We must not suppose that the instruction received by the young

Columbus was more than rudimentary; but by the variety of the objects with which it dealt it gave rein to every strong predilection, and especially to that which early showed itself in him. Thus, in the city of his birth, he was taught, together with reading, writing and arithmetic, the first principles of drawing and painting, which served him well in later life in the preparation of geographic charts. At the University of Pavia, to which he was sent at the age of nine, he learned the Latin tongue, one of the two great keys to knowledge; Aristotle's physics, which then were taught as Natural Philosophy; and under the name of Astrology, he was instructed in surveying, in all then known of Astronomy, and in the fanciful sciences of prognostication, of judicial astrology, and of the Cabala.

To the same class of studies, over which he passed but slightly, belonged also Geometry. Columbus does not seem to have given to this important branch of mathematical science all the attention which it deserved. His powerful and active imagination, though united in him, as in most of his countrymen, with strong practical good sense, was still the ruling power of his youth; and his scholastic pursuits were soon abandoned for the adventurous life of a sailor.

An absorbing passion for the sea will often spring up in a boy's mind even when everything opposes his wishes; we may judge, then, how it would take possession of a lad born and brought up in such a seaport as Genoa in the fifteenth century.

Even in our own time, of all the maritime cities of Italy, Genoa, seen from the sea, still leaves upon the voyager's mind the most lively and lasting impression. Rising like an amphitheatre over one of the most beautiful bays in the world, between mountains of noble outline and soft coloring, clear-cut between the magic blue of sea and sky, she emerges behind a forest of masts, lifting, story above

story, her painted houses, her hanging gardens bright with fountains, her light towers and fantastic belfries, and the glory of her marble palaces.

Some part of this magnificence was wanting in Columbus' time. The gardens and the palaces belong to a later date. The city was more warlike and less luxurious than the Genoa of to-day; but the situation of the town, her marble houses, the splendor of her churches, her princely wealth, her renown in war and commerce, and the pride of her inhabitants, had already won for her the name of *Genoa la Superba*.

She had played a great part in the Crusades; she disputed successfully with Venice the commerce of the Indies; she had long crushed her rival Pisa, and the young Columbus, before he went to Pavia, must often have passed before the doors of the Bank of St. George, where are still hung the chains of the port of Pisa, broken through by the Genoese fleet. In this same building, too, he must often have admired the Griffin of Genoa, grasping in his talons the imperial eagle of Frederic and the Pisan fox; and under this emblematical group, have deciphered the motto:

“Griphus ut has angit
Sic hostes Genua frangit.”

“As the griffin tears these, so does Genoa break to pieces her enemies.”

Yet the day was approaching when the Republic of Genoa, abusing her liberty so often won and lost, should be delivered by the traitor Ludovico el Moro into the power of France. The senseless quarrels and strife of parties which were destined in after days to make her indifferent to her son's splendid offer of a new world, could

not, however, affect the youth of the great discoverer. Perhaps they even attracted him, in contrast with the quiet university city of Pavia.

But deepest of all was the impression made upon the young Columbus by the intense maritime activity of Genoa, and by the glory of such naval Commanders and foreign traders as the Dorias, the Fieschi, the Balbi, the Brignole, the Grimaldi and the Durazzos. Among these imperishable names was that of a certain Francesco Columbus, a captain in the naval force of King Louis XI. of France, and surnamed the Arch-pirate. Another Columbus, distinguished from the first by the appellation of *El Mozo* (the young) had also won renown as a valiant admiral. He was in command of a little squadron equipped at his own expense; and under the Genoese flag, but at his own risk, he sailed the sea as far as to Gibraltar, making war sometimes on the Barbary coast, sometimes on the Venetian rivals of Genoa. His expeditions, men said, had brought him great wealth.

Such remembrances and such examples, kept alive as they were by correspondence with his family, and thrown into brilliant relief by his tranquil and studious life in Pavia, doubtless diverted the lad from his lessons; and he had hardly acquired the elements of nautical astronomy when he eagerly besought his father's consent to carry his knowledge into immediate practice. With this object he returned to Genoa, where for some months he partook with his brother Bartholomew the humble labors of Dominic.

We may suppose that the opposition of the latter to the project of his sons (for Bartholomew shared in his brother's wishes) was overcome by the presence at Genoa of one of the illustrious navigators named Columbus of whom we have made mention. At all events Christopher made his first voyage, at the age of fourteen, under the command of the elder Columbus: no small proof of the rela-

tionship which the descendants of the Arch-pirate and his nephew were one day to claim with such pertinacity. The illustrious Admiral would have been somewhat amazed, when he took the young Christopher on board, to hear that he would owe to this recruit the honor of being known to posterity.

Of their expedition together, and, indeed, of the life of Columbus about this time, we know hardly anything. Dates are utterly wanting. We know that in one of his Mediterranean voyages, he received a wound so serious that he felt the effects of it even in his old age. He refers to it in a letter dated July 7th, 1503. We know also from Columbus himself that he commanded the Genoese galleys off the Isle of Cyprus, in a war against Venice. He speaks, too, of a voyage to Chio, in language which gives one a high idea of his powers of observation; while another story shows him to us as crafty and adroit as Ulysses. An expedition had been sent to Tunis on behalf of King René of Anjou, when the Genoese, about 1460, tried to conquer Naples from the House of Aragon for their ally John of Calabria.

"It was my fortune," writes Columbus, "to be sent to Tunis by King René, whom God hath taken to himself, to capture the galley Fernandina; and when I had arrived off the island of San Pietro in Sardinia, two ships of war and a carrack were with the galley; which so alarmed my crew that they declared they would go no further, but would return to Marseilles for another ship and a larger force of men. As I had no means of compelling them, I affected to yield to their desires. I changed the points of compass, and hoisted all sail. This was the evening; and on the morrow morning we were off Cartagena, while they all believed themselves on the way to Marseilles."

We know not in what year Columbus first passed the Straits of Gibraltar; but he tells us that before his first voyage of discovery

he had seen Northern Europe and England, and that he had been several times from Lisbon to the Guinea coast. In his Prophecies (*Profecias*) he writes "From the tenderest age have I been upon the sea, and to this day have I continued to navigate. Whoever gives himself up to the practice of this art must desire to know the secrets of nature here below. Whatever voyages have been made by former men, I too have made them."

The longest of these voyages was to Iceland. We shall describe this in its place; but here we may note, in spite of incredulous historians, that no suggestion of the existence of a new world could have come to Columbus through his Northern expeditions. His true glory does not lie in a discovery whose importance and significance he died without clearly comprehending, but in the strength of character and of judgment which brought him upon this discovery while he was dreaming of another. It was the harmonious balance of his qualities, the union in him of all the elements of greatness, which has secured for Columbus his place in history.

He was withal a man of singular humility. In the darkest hours of discouragement, he was convinced of ultimate success, and bore himself proudly before men; but he always attributed the conception and the execution of his magnificent designs to the inspiration of Providence. In his letters and writings are abundant proofs of his piety. Like the Maid of Orleans, the son of the Genoese artisan had visions and prophetic dreams; like her he heard celestial voices calling him to a great work; and as Joan, when she crowned Charles VII. in the Cathedral of Rheims, restored the unity of France, so did Columbus, when he bound together the Old World and the New, restore the unity of mankind.

His great discovery always presented itself to him as a religious



THE PROPHETIC VISION

mission. This we know both from his writings and from contemporary accounts. A cogent and picturesque proof is the sketch preserved in the Royal Palace at Genoa, and said to be from the pen of Columbus himself. This sketch of a painting or of a fresco represents in allegory the departure of Columbus for the new world. The hero is seated upon a car with great paddle-wheels, which beat against an angry sea. At his side, pointing out and opening the way, is *Providence*; *Religion* urges his chariot through the waves; *Ignorance* and *Envy* strive to hold it back. Each figure has an explanatory inscription, and the sketch bears the emblematic mark which Columbus used as a signature, and in which the etymology of *Christopher* is made as striking as possible.

So is it in the famous map of the New World drawn in 1500 by Juan de la Cosa of Biscay, the companion of Columbus. At the top of this inestimable record the patron saint of Columbus is represented, according to the legend, bearing the infant Jesus on his shoulders across the waters. A learned writer, to whom the history of Portugal, of Spain, and of the New World is deeply indebted, M. Ferdinand Denis, is inclined to think that the artist geographer has given to the saint the features of the illustrious navigator. This presumption is at least plausible; and the likeness in question becomes the more interesting, since no other portrait of Columbus is absolutely authentic. In fact, these portraits are so unlike each other, that our artist, seeking to lose no trait of the original, has been compelled to rely chiefly upon the descriptions given by Oviedo, Gomera, Las Casas, and more especially by Ferdinand Columbus.

The first of these says in so many words that "Columbus was a well-made man, strong of limb, of a fresh and ruddy complexion, spotted here and there with freckles."

It appears also from different passages in Gomera and Las Casas that "the Admiral" was tall, well made, robust and of noble bearing. He had a long face, neither full nor thin; his complexion was lively, inclining to red, with a few freckles; his nose was aquiline; his cheekbones rather prominent; his blue-grey eyes kindled quickly.

"In his youth," says Ferdinand Columbus, "my father had light hair; but before he was thirty, it had become white."

To these details we may add upon good authority that his forehead was high, his lower lip slightly projecting and his chin dimpled. His eye and ear were exceedingly quick, and his sense of smell exquisitely keen. He loved perfumes; and even on his campaigns, if we trust Oviedo, his linen and his gloves were scented with essences and dried flowers. But there his luxury ended. Sober by inclination and by habit, Columbus may be added to the list of great men who lived chiefly upon vegetables, and preferred water to wine.

We may add that his taste for simplicity, a taste too often in harmony with his straitened circumstances, was united with the most scrupulous care of his dress and person, even when he wore the costume of an Associate of the Franciscan order.

This detailed and consistent description is not reproduced in a single feature by the extant portraits of Columbus. None of these portraits, consequently, is now regarded as authentic. It is only by examining the original authorities that we can form an idea, and attempt to create a likeness of the great navigator.

We have given in a condensed form all the facts which are certainly known about this part of his life, dwelling especially upon what he has said himself in his writings. Unfortunately, the details which have been preserved to us concerning this period of his life are few and disconnected. Many links in the chain are wanting, and dates

are very rare. There is nothing, for instance, which enables us to fix the time of a military exploit too well authenticated and too interesting to be omitted here.

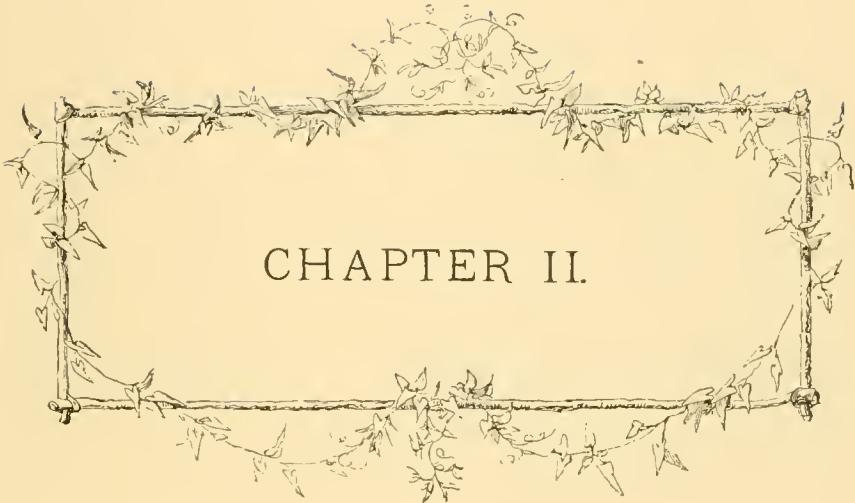


THE SHIPWRECK OFF CAPE ST. VINCENT.

Columbus, according to the historian Bossi, commanded one of the ships of his namesake El Mozo in a cruise off the Portuguese

coast, when at the break of day, between Lisbon and Cape St. Vincent, appeared four Venetian galleys, returning to Flanders with a rich cargo. In spite of the disproportion of forces, Columbus did not hesitate to attack them; and the engagement lasted till night-fall; when the ship to which that of our hero was grappled took fire, and in a moment the conflagration became general. Every one escaped as best he could. Deserted alike by friend and enemy, Columbus sprang into the sea, and by the help of a floating oar which came within his reach, succeeded in swimming to shore, two leagues from the scene of the conflagration. Succored by charity until he had recovered his strength, he determined to go on to Lisbon, where he arrived in a state of utter destitution, but where he met his brother Bartholomew. For this adventure no credible date is assigned; and we must be content to accept it upon the universal belief of contemporaries, and its strong intrinsic probability.

We know from authentic documents that he arrived at Lisbon in the year 1470. He was now thirty-five; and from this time the details of his life become of historic certainty and importance. The great idea which had long taken entire possession of him, now regulated his every action; and we can no longer separate the man from his work. We have been slow in reaching this point; but it was necessary for us to become acquainted with the character of the great navigator, and especially with the moral qualities which constitute his true grandeur. "Not the suffering," says Tertullian, "but the cause, makes the martyr." In the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus we shall find at once the cause, the martyr and the crown.



CHAPTER II.



THE QUAY OF LISBON.

CHAPTER II.

IN 1470, the year to which we can refer with certainty the arrival of Columbus at Lisbon, that city was frequented by a great number of Italians, tradesmen, mariners, adventurers and artisans of

every kind, some of whom had settled there for life. And not they only, but all the maritime nations of the Old World had their representatives at Lisbon, as actors or as spectators in the great drama of geographical discovery. The world saw, for the first time, nautical expeditions set forth under the guidance of scientific knowledge. The Portuguese coast, then the most enlightened region in Europe, was seething with a mental and material fermentation to which nothing in our day presents any analogy. This throng from every nation was gathered together, with some undefined expectation, at a common rendezvous; and, like the Hebrews on the shores of the Red Sea, were waiting for a new Moses to give the signal of departure.

It was the place of all others for Columbus. He was in high favor with his compatriots, among whom, as we have seen, he had found his brother Bartholomew. Their meeting was not fortuitous. Although Columbus was naturally attracted by the great maritime activity of which Portugal, under the impulse received from Don Henriquez, was then the centre, we may suppose that the presence of Bartholomew at Lisbon was one reason for his brother's journey thither, and certainly decided him to remain there for awhile. Other ties, yet dearer, were soon to bind him to Lisbon. Columbus, like his brother, was equally skilful as pilot and as draughtsman. To these arts he added that of transcribing and illuminating manuscripts. His industry and technical knowledge enabled him to dispose to advantage both of the originals and of his copies. He was thus enabled to eke out a scanty living.

This pause between the two most active parts of his life enabled him to revive and greatly to increase his literary and scientific acquirements. The extent of these acquirements is indicated in one of his last writings. "The Lord," says he in his *Prophecies*, "hath

bestowed upon me an abundant knowledge of navigation; of the science of the stars He hath given me what suffices; so also of geom-



THE YEARS OF PREPARATION.

try and of arithmetic. More than this, He hath granted me wisdom and dexterity to draw the spheres, and to put thereupon, in their proper places, cities, rivers and mountains."

He adds finally, and this passage is especially noteworthy: "I have turned myself to all sorts of studies, to History, Chronicles, Philosophy, and other arts of which the Lord hath granted me understanding."

In this he did not exaggerate. He had, for a man of his time, an immense knowledge of books; but it was desultory and disconnected. It appears in all his writings; in the diffuseness of his style; in the naïveté of his language, and in the abundance and wealth of his imagery. From the quotations scattered through his writings we may make out the inventory of his library. We take especial pleasure in finding there the books which prepared and strengthened him for his search for those lands in the West, the tradition or the presentiment of which goes back to the first ages of history.

In the Book of Job, he read of "a land hidden from the eyes of all living, even from the birds of the air, the way to which was known to God only."

Esdras, after affirming that the ocean occupies only a small portion of the earth, adds in the true spirit of prophecy, "One day shall be brought to light a land which now is hidden."

But among the sacred writings the prophecies of Isaiah were foremost in Columbus' thoughts. At length the prophet appeared to him in his dreams, and pointing with one hand to the West, confirmed his assurance of a great discovery.

To these sacred authorities was united the testimony of numerous secular writers, poets and philosophers. In Plato the Genoese navigator found the story of Atlantis, and saw in it more than a philosophic romance or the dream of an old man. For him, the Atlantis of Plato, of Solon and of the Egyptian sages was a country separated from the Eastern world by a convulsion of Nature, and one day to be reunited to it by the genius of man.

Seneca, too, had sung in beautiful and inspired verse, "When the Ocean hath broken her bands in which the terrestrial world lies prisoned, then in future ages shall Thetis unveil to thee a great new land, and Thule shall be no longer the limit of the habitable world."

Plutarch had seen this great unknown country reflected in the mirror of the moon; long before Seneca's time the poetic tradition ran of a huge island lying beyond the Columns of Hercules. There, according to the myth of Theopompus, reigned an eternal spring. There Saturn slept in a deep cave, surrounded by the genii who had served him while yet he reigned over gods and men; and these genii kept the register of the dreams of their slumbering master, whose visions were the thoughts of Jove. Not one of these details could be disputed, for a man of our world, a sage who had lived in this land of the Meropians, had revealed to Sylla what he had learned from the genii who guarded the sleep of Saturn.

To these songs of the Muse who watched over the youth of Columbus, Science and Philosophy, by the mouths of Aristotle, of Strabo and of Diodorus Siculus, added more precise information. The mighty Aristotle had said, or had been reported to say, "All these facts prove beyond doubt not only that the earth is round, but that its circumference is not very great. * * * The relation between the islands known to us and the seas which environ them holds also between our continent and the Atlantic. * * * In the Ocean which extends beyond the Columns of Hercules the Carthaginians discovered, they say, a desert island covered with forests and pierced with navigable rivers."

So Strabo, commenting upon Eratosthenes, had written: "The temperate zone comes back upon itself in the shape of a circle, so that, if the Atlantic were not so broad, we could go by the Iberian

(or Spanish) sea to India, always keeping on the same parallel of latitude."

To go by the Spanish sea to India! This great problem, which it was the task of Columbus to solve, had been dealt with more or less by many authors. The breadth of the Atlantic, which had been such a scarecrow to Strabo, was so lightly regarded by the school of Aristotle that Seneca at a comparatively late date had written in his *Natural Questions*, "When man contemplates the universe, the majestic course of the stars, and of that celestial region through which Saturn rolls his thirty years' orbit, he despises the narrow confines of his Mother Earth. How far is it from the further coasts of Spain to India? but a few days' journey, with a favoring wind."

We are quoting only here and there from the testimony of antiquity, to which Columbus, in common with his age, attached immense importance. However great his erudition may have seemed according to the standard of the time, he did not always quote his authorities from the original. Bacon, Averroes, and Martyr d'Anghiera, even Nicolo de Lira, and especially Pierre d'Ailly, an ingenious compiler, are the names which occur most frequently in his naive compositions.

There are two personages whom he has not quoted, but who must have influenced him strongly, the merchant-sailor Conti, and the famous Marco Polo, surnamed *Messer Milione*, for his traveller's tales of the gold and jewels of China and Ceylon. The tales of these men consisted in part of facts which they had observed, and partly of marvels which they had taken on hearsay. Their Voyages were the common reading of the time, figuring in all contemporary memoirs as the chief topics of conversation. Columbus must have read them; and if he did not believe in Polo's cities of gold, with twelve

thousand bridges (whose number Conti gravely corrects to ten thousand), he might justly suppose that this Cathay, of whose opulence the discoverer had brought back golden proof, would at least pay the charges of a new crusade. And this was the real object of the poor Genoese pilot; to discover the shortest route from Europe to India, and to consecrate the treasures obtained by this discovery to the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre.

While he was sketching the outlines of his great design with a peculiar mixture of prudence and zeal, having, as he said later, "constant intercourse with men of letters, with ecclesiastics and laymen, Latins and Greeks, Jews and Moors," an unexpected circumstance not only brought about a happy change in his private life, but furnished him with new means of study and of practical observation.

About the time of his arrival in Portugal, the little Italian colony attached to the country by the protection of Don Henriquez had just suffered a grievous loss. Barthélemy Mognis de Perestrello, a celebrated naval commander in the service of the Infant, had just died, ruined by the very recompense awarded to his faithful services. He had been named Governor of Porto Santo, one of the Madeira Islands, and empowered to colonize it, with a grant of great possessions therein. But his capital was not sufficient for so great an enterprise; and a curious disaster ruined the colony and his hopes. The first settlers had brought with them some rabbits. These little animals multiplied with such rapidity that they devoured every green herb in the island, and rendered cultivation impossible.

In the reduced condition of the family, an offer of marriage from a man, poor like themselves, but of noble birth, was readily accepted. Columbus had become attached to Donna Felippa de Perestrello, and

had succeeded in recommending himself to her; and the wedding soon took place. It was not a marriage which would commend itself to a prudent matchmaker. The bride had vast possessions in a desert island; the bridegroom had a world yet to be discovered.

They lived under the same roof with the Perestrello family, and Columbus helped towards the common support by his map-drawing and bookselling; but the high social position of his new relations secured for him the attention of great people, and finally brought him to the notice of the King, with whom he talked of his voyages, and probably of his schemes. In confirmation of his project, the King showed him one day sugar canes, as large as the cane of India, which had been picked up floating off the Azores. Columbus learned moreover that on these shores and those of the Madeira Islands had been driven by the Western winds sometimes huge pines of different species from those of the Old World, sometimes pieces of wood delicately carved in patterns unknown to Europe. Still more; on the beach of the Ile des Fleurs had been found two corpses of men totally unlike any of the known races of mankind.

This information, which only confirmed his convictions, Columbus received from a skilful and hardy naval commander, Don Pedro Correa, who had married the youngest sister of Donna Felippa, and succeeded to his father-in-law as Governor of Porto Santo.

Columbus and his wife went with the new Governor to this island where their common interests now lay, and there was born to them a son, to whom they gave the Spanish name Diego.

The hopes which drew Columbus to Porto Santo proved fallacious; and he resumed his sailor's avocation. He saw the Guinea coast, and the mouth of the Golden River (*Fleuve d'Or*), and his mind was inflamed by the sight of the Portuguese discoveries in

Africa. Many of these discoveries were due to Don Barthélemy de Perestrello, his father-in-law, and were recorded in Don Barthélemy's note-books and maps, which were now in the possession of Columbus.

In 1473, he was in Salone, helping to support his aged father, who was still in the same pecuniary straits which had compelled him to leave Genoa.

In 1474, a memorable date, he modestly submitted his completed projects to the famous Toscanelli, one of the lights of the New Geography, and found this illustrious savant in full accord with his hopes and belief.

By the year 1476, his plans were so perfected in the minutest details that no further modification was ever found necessary. Accordingly, he went back to Genoa, his native city, and from thence to Venice. He laid bare before either State in turn his schemes and expectations, and offered to either the gift of a new world. But his patriotic efforts failed to overcome the prejudices, the pride, and the proverbial economy of republics. He went once again to visit his father at Salone, and then, taking little thought of the adventurers who might profit by the publication of his plans, he resumed the sailor life which solaced him under every disappointment. For he was a true child of the Ocean; sharing her profoundness of depth and her stormy impulses. His eyes shone with the blue and the fire of the Sea; and he turned from an unfriendly world to the bosom of his mother.

We meet him next in Iceland, hundreds of miles from ungrateful Italy. There is not a trace, in his notes upon this voyage, of bitterness at his failure.

"In the month of February of the year 1477, I sailed more than a hundred miles beyond Tille (Thule), whose southern portion is

seventy-three degrees above the Equator, and not sixty-three, as some geographers pretend; and Tille is without the line which terminates



COLUMBUS BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

the west of Ptolemy. The English, especially the men of Bristol, go with their merchandize to this island, which is as large as England. When I was there, the sea was not frozen, although the tides rise

and fall twenty-six fathoms. It is true that the Tille of which Ptolemy speaks lies where he has indicated, and is now called Friesland."

In spite of errors of distance and of latitude which, in the present state of geographical science, would be apparent to a child, this passage bears witness to the writer's rare sagacity. He is the first among modern writers to distinguish between two islands of Thule, the smallest and southernmost of which is called Finland, and is the *ultima Thule* of Ptolemy and Strabo. To use Humboldt's expression, Columbus had *divined* what our researches into ancient geography have rendered more and more probable.

We may here note that Humboldt, in his remarks upon the passage quoted, refuses to admit that Columbus could have received in Iceland any information of a nature to encourage him in the prosecution of his great enterprise. "He might have learned," says he, "that the Scandinavian colonists of Greenland had discovered Vinland, and the Friesland fishermen had landed at an island called *Drogeo*; but all this news would have seemed to him to have no connection with his projects." The celebrated geographer, Adam of Bremen, no doubt knew of the existence of Vinland in the tenth century, and at a later date Ortelius referred the discovery of the American continent to the Normans of the ninth century; but the works of these authors were not published to the world, the former until long after the death of Columbus, and the latter only ten years before it. Moreover, if he had learned all these facts in Iceland, they would necessarily have influenced his plans, whereas we find him, after his return, submitting those plans to King John and his council just in the same shape in which they were laid before Toscanelli in 1474.

The intelligent successor of Alphonso V. gave at first to these

overtures a better reception than the Senators of Genoa and Venice. Matters went so far that Columbus named his price in case of success. This price was deemed exorbitant, especially in consideration of his poverty and obscurity; but Columbus refused to abate a jot of it, and resumed his humble occupations with a calmness and industry which still further commended him to the King.

In spite of the contemptuous opposition of some of his household, the monarch brought the matter before a Superior Council. It was discussed with much heat, and (a noteworthy sign of progress) was treated altogether as a question of expense. The King seemed willing to incur any sacrifice of men and money; and Columbus was asked to prepare a detailed account of his general and special proposals, with reasons and calculations to support them. He obeyed without suspicion, and waited patiently for the result of an examination to which he was not admitted. This examination lasted long. It was still going on, and the little that transpired concerning it seemed to Columbus to augur well for his hopes, when a rumor spread through Lisbon which made him suspend his judgment.

A number of sailors, recently returned in sorry plight from some mysterious expedition, heaped ridicule upon the Genoese and his notions. At first in whispers, and afterwards, as they warmed with wine, openly and loudly, they boasted that they had tried this famous project of Columbus, and had paid dear for their captain's confidence in that adventurer.

Their tales were partly true: the commander of these braggarts, a sailor of some reputation, had been furnished with copies of the plans, maps, and notes of Columbus, and had been sent to sea, ostensibly bound for Cape Verde, to rob the confiding Genoese of his just reward. But it was easier to appropriate the conception of



FATHER AND SON.

Columbus than his will and genius. A few days' navigation westward exhausted their courage. A great fear came upon them of the unknown latitudes into which they were steering. A favoring wind seemed to them only to make their destruction more certain, and they blessed the storm which drove them back, and finally cast them again upon the shores of Portugal.

No one, according to their captain's account, could possibly have succeeded where he had failed. The Ocean was impassably broad, and none but a fool would deny it. Columbus was firm in his belief, but the treachery with which he had been treated determined him to make no further offers to the Portuguese. The King saw his fault too late, and not unjustly cast the blame on his advisers. He offered Columbus all that had been in dispute between them, but in vain; the great navigator was immovable. He went back to his work and to his studies; and at length, towards the end of 1484, having strong apprehensions that the mission which he had once been eager to undertake would now be forced upon him, he left Lisbon suddenly and quietly, taking with him his young son Diego.

He had lost, to his great grief, the loving companion who had helped him to sustain the burden and heat of the day. He longed for his native air and for home faces; and he went first to Genoa. He found little encouragement there, for his plans found no favor with the parsimonious officers of State; but he saw his old father again, and settled him comfortably in his little house in the city limits.

His duty fulfilled alike to his family and to his ungrateful country, he suddenly determined, for some reason unknown to us, to go next into Spain.

Like a bird of passage, which long circles undecided over the same space, and then suddenly shoots away like an arrow in a

straight unchanging path, so had Columbus turned at last to his distant goal.



HIS FATHER'S PARTING BENEDICTION.

CHAPTER III.



CHAPTER III.

To one who bears in mind the condition of Europe at the end of the fifteenth century, it will seem that Spain was, of all the States of Christendom, that from which Columbus could have hoped the least.

True, the monarchs of that country were Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, noted for their piety and for their poverty, to both of which the enterprise of our hero made appeal. But Spain was at that moment engaged in a brilliant and successful

war against the Moors, and was rescuing her soil foot by foot from the Moslem. Love of glory and love of gain alike urged her to finish this patriotic work before concerning herself with the conquest and conversion of a distant and unknown people. The Moors and the Arabs were nearer at hand and more redoubtable than the inhabitants of Cipangu and Cathay. The nation and the crown alike were impoverished by the sacrifices demanded by the war, and had neither men nor means to spare for an expedition so uncertain as that of Columbus.

We may suppose that these considerations had not escaped his mind. When he asked of warlike and impoverished Spain what had been refused to him by his native Genoa, by opulent Venice and adventurous Portugal, it was because of a ruler in whom Spain surpassed them all. He found in Isabella the Catholic the destined lever through whom he could move the world.

Isabella united in a wonderful degree the strength of a man with the grace and charm of a woman. She seemed chosen by Heaven for the double task of driving the Crescent from Spain and of bringing about the discovery of the New World.

We must give her husband the credit of sometimes understanding her, and of leaving her judgment unfettered. He shared her power while they lived, and her fame after death. They have gone down to posterity together as the Two Kings.

The repulse of the Portuguese invasion, the reëstablishment of order in the finances of the kingdom, the growth of national wealth, reform among the clergy and in the convents, the encouragement of Art, of Science and of the *belles lettres*;—these are the smallest achievements of their reign. What part of these was due to Ferdinand we may judge from the history of Columbus.

Versed alike in war, in science and in letters, Isabella was only

the more eager to merit the commendation bestowed upon the Roman nation: *Lanam fecit.* No other hand than hers ever spun the linen for her husband's use.

Her modesty was as great as her intelligence. At the council board her first desire was to be fully informed; and once having taken her resolution, she expressed it with grace and dignity. One day, when respectfully blamed for her slowness in prosecuting the siege of Grenada, she plucked a pomegranate, the Spanish name of which is *grenada*, and, eating it slowly, kernel after kernel, "It is kernel by kernel," said she, "that Grenada must be eaten."

Isabella is above all praise. M. de Montalembert proclaims her "the most noble creature who ever reigned over men." Among her contemporaries, Oviedo is lost in contemplating "that splendid soul, that sea of virtues." Others compare her to St. Helena, the mother of Constantine, to St. Theresa, to St. Elizabeth of Hungary. Peter Martyr wrote to one of the most illustrious Romans of the Renaissance, "Take for a Sibylline leaf, Pomponius, what I am about to tell you. This woman is stronger than a strong man; she is above humanity, the soul of modesty and honor."

Ferdinand's chaplain declares himself unable to paint such charms and such virtues. All the grace, distinction and dignity of the King were present, he says, in a degree yet more conspicuous in his consort.

And finally, the Franciscan cardinal Cisneros, celebrated both for his scientific and administrative ability, declares that the sun never shone upon her equal. Cisneros had been not only a member of her Council, but her private spiritual adviser. Before she knew him, however, she had found in the Franciscan brotherhood a Director who was to exert a decisive influence upon the most glorious act of her reign.

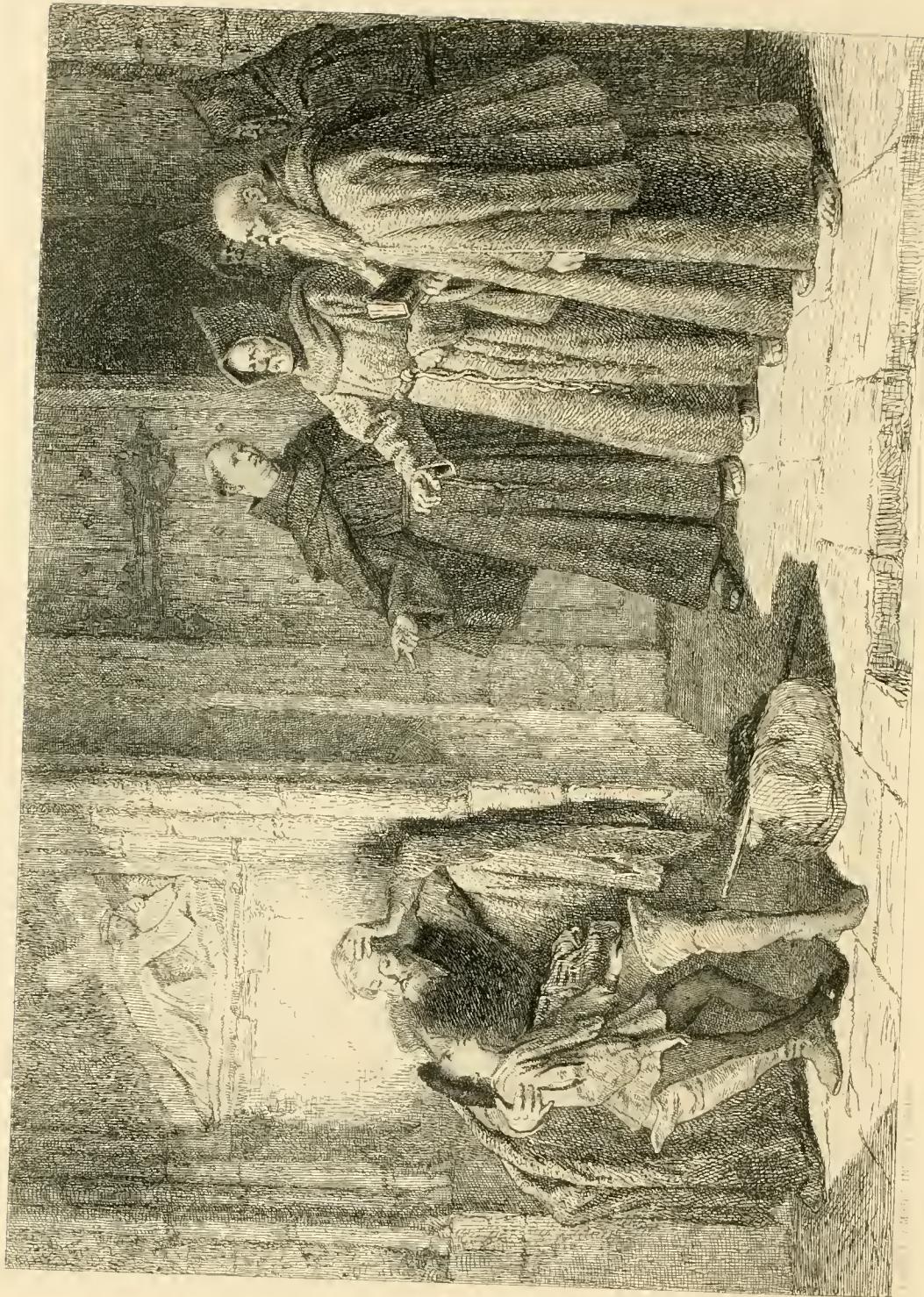
Juan Perez de Marchena was a Franciscan friar, with nothing to recommend him but a growing reputation for science and for piety,



IN THE ROYAL PRESENCE.

when Isabella chose him as her confessor. Like a loyal subject, he obeyed his Sovereign's bidding; but his heart was in the cloister, and he soon obtained the Queen's consent to a retirement which

AT THE MONASTERY GATE.

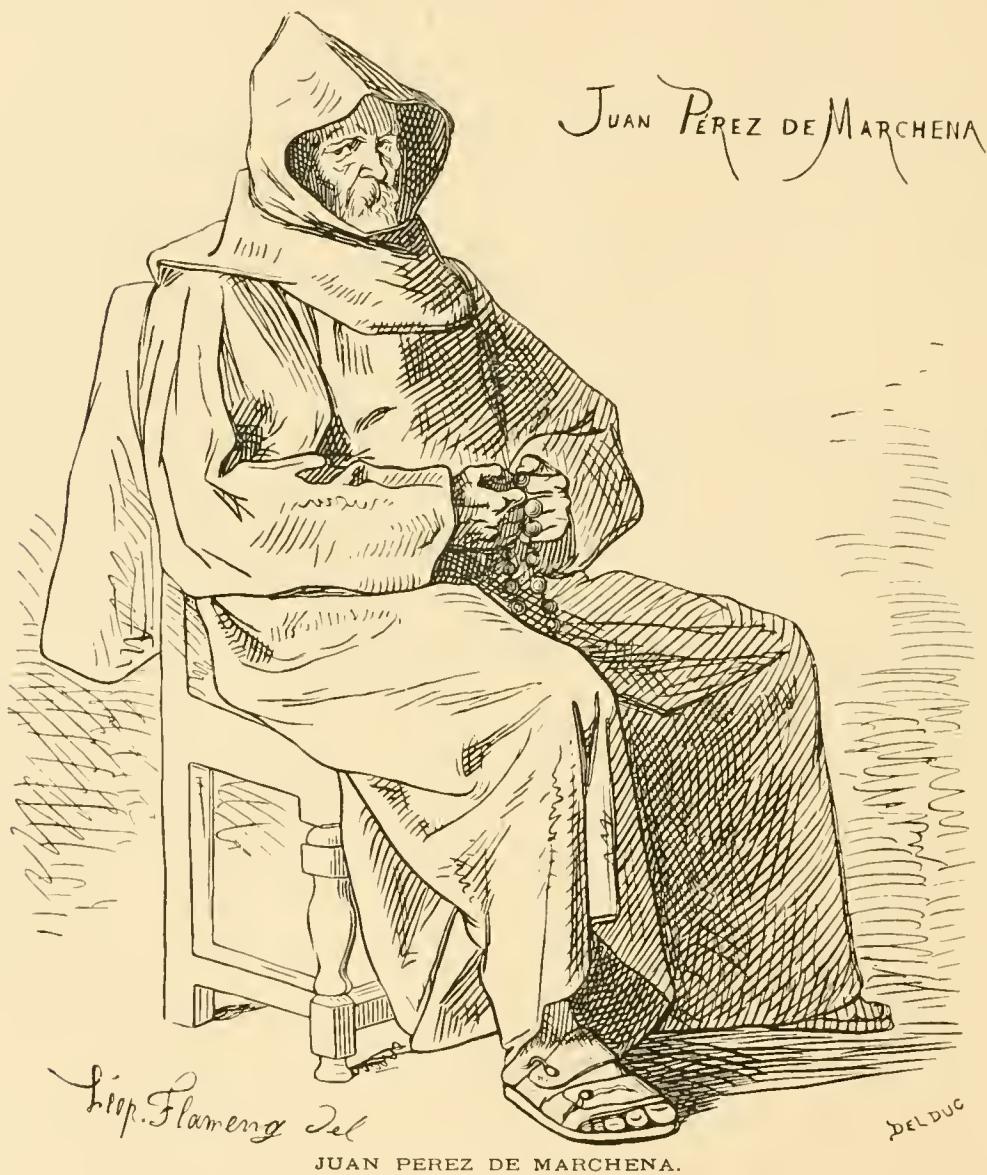


suited well his turn for meditation and study. But Isabella was not willing wholly to lose his counsel; and in his observatory at the monastery of Santa Maria de la Rabida, Juan Perez was often drawn from his researches and his exercises of devotion to answer the letters of his Queen.

A more favorable place for astronomical observation could hardly have been found. This convent, lately restored from a ruinous condition by a French prince, commands the view southward of a vast sweep of ocean, and northward of the great plain of the Guadalquivir and the Guadiana. The monastic community was poor, depending for subsistence in great measure upon a garden, a few vines, and a grove of huge cypresses, umbrella-pines, and palm trees. One of the latter is still standing, the only tree in the garden of La Rabida which the ravages of time and the ruthless hand of man have spared. At a little distance is Palos de Moguer, a small sea port, now as desolate and forsaken as the monastery which overlooks it and the country around; but in 1485 it was a place of some importance; and Father Juan de Marchena found at his service the experience of pilots not a few, and even of some men of education, such as Garcia Hernandez, the physician of the community.

One day when Hernandez had just made his regular visit to the convent, the Father Superior accompanied him to the gate. His attention was attracted to a group outside. A young lad with a fine, noble countenance, but pale and thin, and apparently overcome by fatigue, was eagerly devouring some food which the good porter had offered him. Opposite him stood a man, almost in rags and covered with dust, who watched his boy with the tender look of a father. Juan de Marchena, too, was a father, the father of a poor community. Moved by the sight, he came forward, and prayed the stranger to

take food and drink; and after his guest had repaired his wasted strength, the good monk, who had recognized in his clear eyes the expression of a noble soul, began to question him concerning his past.



The stranger answered that he was a Genoese, as his accent had betrayed; that his name was Christopher Columbus; and that having

conceived and elaborated a plan for going to India by way of the Ocean Sea, he had come to offer to the Two Kings a share in the glory of the enterprise.

This naive declaration, which would have moved the ridicule of many, excited no surprise in Father Marchena; he replied that he shared the convictions of Columbus; that he doubted not that the Two Kings (or at least one of them) would welcome his proposal with joy; but that circumstances were unfavorable for the present, and while waiting for the opportunity, Columbus, he hoped, would remain with their little community.

The offer was accepted in the spirit in which it had been made, and Diego and his father assumed the same day the Franciscan dress. The garb of a Franciscan was not new to Columbus; from motives of piety and of poverty combined, he had often before assumed it.

And here, however impatient I may feel to bring my hero to the execution of his great work, I must ask the reader to pause at this epoch of repose in a life which seems to have had no other time for rest. Columbus remained for nearly a year at La Rabida; but the delay in the execution of his plans was apparently borne without impatience. He had his son with him; he was surrounded by sympathizing and believing friends, and the noble Perez was using all his credit at court to bring his friend's project to a successful issue.

At last the happy hour seemed to have come. The Moorish war had brought the Two Kings to Cordova, where they were to remain a while and rest from their fatigues. Columbus set off for Cordova with a letter of recommendation for the Queen's confessor. But his proposals were not even listened to; he was treated as a visionary, and had the mortification of seeing the Court leave Cordova without having obtained even a glimpse of Isabella. Juan Pe-

rez had been too modest; he had not sent his friend directly to the Queen.

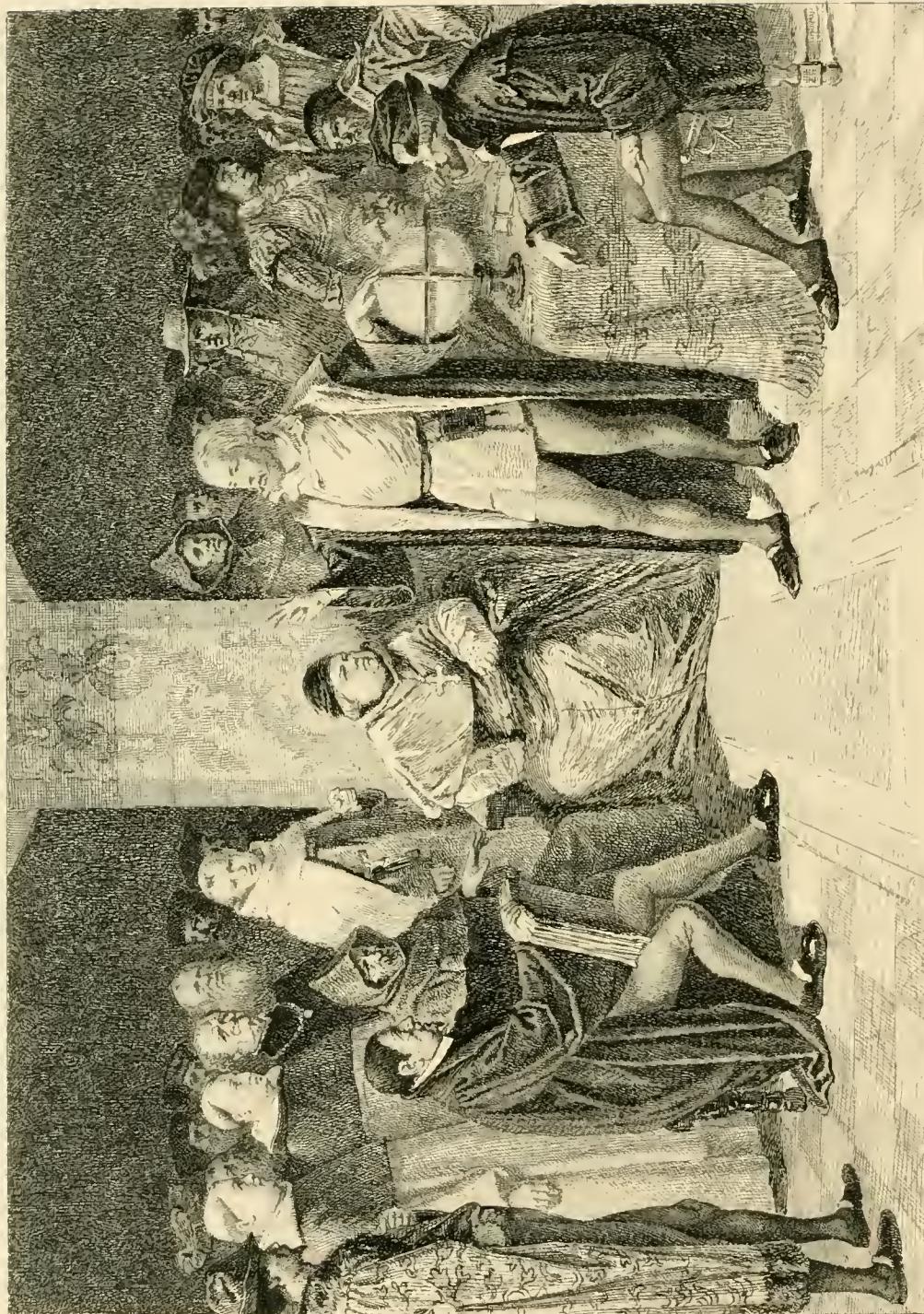
While he remained at Cordova, Columbus took up again for a living his art of map-drawing; all the while, however, enlisting partisans for his project, and making numerous and powerful friends. The merit of the man shone through his humble circumstances, and obtained for him the hand of a girl of noble birth, Beatriz Henriquez, by whom he had a son named Fernando, or Ferdinand. This marriage is related to us by the Historiographer Royal of Spain, Antonio da Herrera. It encountered some opposition from the Henriquez family; but the extent of that opposition has been grossly exaggerated, for on his very first voyage, when his greatness was yet a question for the future to decide, Columbus took with him a nephew of Donna Beatriz; and at a later date, a young brother of hers commanded one of the ships of the third expedition.

But the happiness of the newly married couple could not long endure. Columbus did not belong to himself, but to his work. For a while he might forget his task; but the hour of separation soon came, and Donna Beatriz resigned herself to her loneliness with a self-abnegation which showed her worthy of her husband. She devoted herself to the education of her son, and of Diego, who was left under her charge; she saw her husband only at long intervals; and she lived a quiet, but noble and useful life near her family at Cordova.

Columbus had not been a year married, when the military court of the Two Kings went into summer quarters at Salamanca. To this city Columbus was summoned in haste by Gonzalez de Mendoza, Archbishop of Toledo and Grand Cardinal of Spain. The Cardinal's interest had been invoked by friends in Cordova; and a



CANTARAS A SEMPRE TIRÉS D'UN TA



personal interview with Columbus removed all scruples and difficulties. The obscure Genoese pilot had the honor and the advantage of being presented to the two sovereigns by a personage whose influence and credit were so great that he was called the Third King.

But at that solemn interview, Columbus had no eyes for any potentate but Isabella.

The emotion which the presence of this Queen, the protectress of the Christian faith, excited in the bosom of every fervent Catholic, was increased by her noble demeanor, by the beauty of her features, her abundant yellow hair and sea-gray eyes. The feelings of the great navigator can be left to our reader's imagination.

The future was to be his; but the present lay still in the hand of the adversary. His reasoning, which had prevailed with the Queen and made even the King hesitate, produced little effect on an assemblage composed not of geographers, but of statesmen and theologians. Of this latter class, the Dominicans alone, to the eternal glory of their order, recognized the probability of his theories and his own sincere piety.

In their convent of St. Etienne, they offered Columbus the most generous hospitality. Conferences were held there which had, at least, the effect of raising Columbus in public opinion. The King and Queen were evidently favorable to him; and his judges, while they combated his arguments, declared that they could hardly resist the charm of his eloquence.

Their opposition to him was founded upon the incoherent and obsolete prejudices of a by-gone day. Some of them declared it was absurd to suppose that a hemisphere could exist where men and animals would have to walk with their heads down and their feet in the air. Others admitted the spherical form of the earth, but saw in it an insurmountable obstacle to the return of the expedition.

It was easier for Columbus to refute such objections than to persuade the minds of judges who were secretly biased by the supposed inopportuneness of his project. Operations against the Moors were soon recommenced, and this celebrated assembly, called together with such difficulty, broke up without reaching any conclusion.

But the discussion had effectually confirmed the Two Kings in their favorable opinion; and their liking for Columbus was increased by his active service as soldier and as engineer in the war against the infidels. The siege of Malaga was his first affair. There he saw the heroic Isabella, in shining armor, brandishing the famous sword still preserved for our admiration in the *Armeria Real* of Madrid. On the blade is incrusted the name of the celebrated armorer Antonius. On one side of the hilt is inscribed "Always do I long for honor;" and on the other, "Now am I watching; with me there is peace."

Malaga surrendered in 1487; and Columbus, whose expenses during the war had been repaid to him, and who had been soothed with the most flattering promises, followed the Court to Saragossa, and thence to Valladolid. There he received from the King of Portugal a letter, couched in terms of entreaty, asking for a renewal of their relations, and accepting in advance all the conditions for which "his particular friend" had stipulated previous to the execution of his enterprise. It was now near the end of the year 1488; the war was dragging on its weary length; the Two Kings, no doubt, were well disposed to him, but Columbus felt that this favor did him no good with his adversaries. Under these circumstances, the offer of John II. must have been peculiarly tempting; yet he answered by a respectful but decided refusal. He cherished no rancor against the King of Portugal for an affront for which he had amply atoned; but the

LEOP FLAMING.



ISABELLA AT THE SIEGE OF MALAGA.

chief reliance of the great navigator was on Isabella. The pious enthusiasm of this Queen seemed to him the surest guarantee, not so much of the means for his enterprise, as of the realization of his ultimate designs. The discovery of a Western India was to him only a step toward the delivery of the Holy Land from Mahometan insolence. To the haughty challenge of the Sultan of Egypt, Isabella had answered that she would put Islam between two fires. She had charged, moreover, the two Franciscan monks who conveyed her threats, to announce to the Sultan the surrender of Boza, of which they had been witnesses, and the coming capture of Grenada.

Meanwhile the junta, who had been assembled again at Salamanca to pass upon the projects of Columbus, solemnly declared against them as impracticable both on practical and scientific grounds. This declaration, amusing enough in the light of the present day, had no influence on the Queen. She promised Columbus all that he asked; but the execution of her promises was always postponed till the end of the war; and the war seemed interminable.

Days, months and years succeeded each other with heart-breaking slowness. There were marches and countermarches, battle and sieges, tedious even to read of, but serving as a measure of Columbus' heroic perseverance. In active warfare his time passed quicker; for he had the excitement of danger, and he exposed his life as freely as the meanest soldier. But the festivals and public rejoicings were out of keeping with his mood, with that hope deferred which made his heart sick.

At length he determined to go back to the monastery, and find consolation with the Father Superior. Four years had passed since their separation. Again the kiss of peace was given, and the convent opened wide its gates to the troubled spirit of the great navi-

gator. We need not describe the sorrow of the good Father, who felt that he himself was partly responsible for the fruitless efforts of his friend.

But though Columbus found no fault with Isabella, in whom he had from the outset an implicit belief, and the embarrassments of whose position he understood, he saw that circumstances might long be adverse, and was inclined to repair either to England, where through his brother Bartholomew he had formed several connections, or to the court of Charles VIII. King of France, who had lately given his proposal a favorable reception.

Father Marchena did not hesitate to combat these projects. He reminded Columbus of the youth and fickleness of Charles VIII. and of his enmity to Italy; an enmity which even then was menacing the navigator's native country. In France, too, all his labors must be begun again. If a new Joan of Arc could be found for his protection, he must remember that Joan of Arc had been burned at the stake, without an effort on her countrymen's part to save her.

Nor was Father Marchena alone in pleading his country's cause. During the absence of Columbus, the powerful influence of Juan Perez had raised him up friends and followers as by a miracle. The physician Juan Hernandez not only avowed his belief in the project, but asked and obtained the favor of being on board on the first voyage. Not less zealous and useful was Martin Alonzo Pinzon, one of the best navigators and richest owner of privateers in Palos, who offered to defray a large part of the expenses of the expedition. Such flattering assurances of help could not but soften the mood of Columbus.

One day, seeing him disheartened, Juan Perez, who had taken it upon himself to write directly to the Queen, showed Columbus the

encouraging answer which he had just received, and by which he was summoned to court. Columbus allowed himself to yield; and at his first sign of relenting, the Father Superior borrowed and saddled a mule, and set out at midnight, alone and without a guide. In this

*THE RETURN TO LA RABIDA.*

manner he traversed near a hundred leagues of a country recently conquered from the Moors; and arrived at last, exhausted indeed, but safe and sound, before Grenada, now beleaguered by the Two Kings. The good monk, too, had a siege to press. He was admit-

ted without delay to the presence of Isabella, and wrote to Columbus the same day, "I came, I saw, the Lord conquered."

For Isabella not only renewed to Perez the assurances she had given to Columbus, but summoned the navigator to her presence in pressing terms of courtesy, and with the promise of paying all the expenses of his journey and his stay. An event of still better augury was the fall of Grenada. Columbus came just in time to see the Crescent pale before the Cross, and the keys of the city surrendered to the Spanish sovereigns by Boabdil, the last of the Moorish kings.

The triumphs of his religion, which he hoped to extend beyond the limits of the civilized world, filled Columbus' heart with joy; but the lovely prospect proved again a *mirage*. The junta, again convened in haste, did not venture to treat the Queen's *protégé* with disdain; but, relying upon the more hesitating belief of the King, it rejected absolutely the conditions which Columbus had stipulated for himself in the event of success.

Like the minister of state, who, at the height of his favor, kept in a secret closet his shepherd's coat and crook, Columbus, even when appearances were brightest, had not parted with the faithful mule which had brought him to Court. He made no complaint, and informed no one of his intention, but mounted sadly and rode away to Cordova, to make his preparations for departure, and to bid adieu to his family; he returned once again to Grenada, where nothing had changed for the better, and took the road to France, bidding in his heart an eternal farewell to Spain. His faith in Isabella was gone.

He was wrong. He had not gone two leagues from Grenada, and was about engaging his saddle-horse for the journey upon the Pinos Bridge, when an officer of the royal guards, glittering with embroidery, galloped up at full speed, stopped before him, and, dis-

mounting, respectfully offered him, with uncovered head, a packet sealed with the arms of Aragon and Castile.



THE MIDNIGHT JOURNEY.

Columbus, according to the popular version, refused at first even to acquaint himself with the contents of a missive which could no longer affect his resolve. But the name of Isabella constrained him. He opened the packet, and found therein no empty promises, but the draught of Letters Patent, according to him all which he had asked.

We shall soon

hear him enumerating the honors and privileges conferred on him by the Queen; for it was to her alone that he owed this simple acceptance of the conditions on which he had so manfully insisted before the Junta.

To whom was due this sudden and decisive intervention of the Queen? We need hardly say it was to Juan Perez.

The good Father no sooner learned the Junta's decision, than

without wasting words in a vain effort to alter the resolution of Columbus, he went directly to Isabella. In her presence, supported by the faithful Quintanella and the beautiful Duchess of Moya, whose name should be inscribed on these pages in letters of gold, the courageous Franciscan pleaded the cause of genius; not against Isabella, who was already persuaded, but against Ferdinand, who placed his objections only on the score of an exhausted treasury. This had in truth been the real obstacle from the outset. But the Queen, by a happy inspiration, offered to pledge the jewels of her crown to defray the cost of the expedition.

The King yielded gracefully to her will, but threw upon the crown of Castile all the risk and peril of the enterprise. Luiz de Sant-Angel did better. He was Receiver of the Ecclesiastical Dues of Aragon; he left the crown of Castile its diamonds, he refused the Queen's pledge, and engaged to advance all the necessary expenses.

Meanwhile Juan Perez had set off for Palos, blessing the name of Him who holds in his hand the hearts of Kings and Queens. Scarcely a month after his return to the monastery, Columbus rejoined him. In his possession were Letters Patent authorizing his expedition, together with a "Letter of Privilege," raising him to the rank of Grand Admiral of the Ocean Seas, and conferring on him the title of *Don*.

It was also provided that the port of Palos, from which were due to the crown two caravels, armed and fully manned, should be the place of embarkation, and the community of that city were allowed ten days to make ready.

This latter clause was exceedingly unpopular; and the very sailors who, the evening before, would all have vouched for the success of Columbus, now, when they were asked to help him, showed a repugnance almost amounting to revolt.

This last effort of the adversary, as Columbus called it, was greatly annoying to the newly created Admiral. But his better angel was in the ascendant. The authority and the persuasions of Juan Perez and his monks recalled the rebellious to their duty, and calmed their foolish terrors. Martin Alonzo Pinzon, whose friendly disposition



WESTWARD HO!

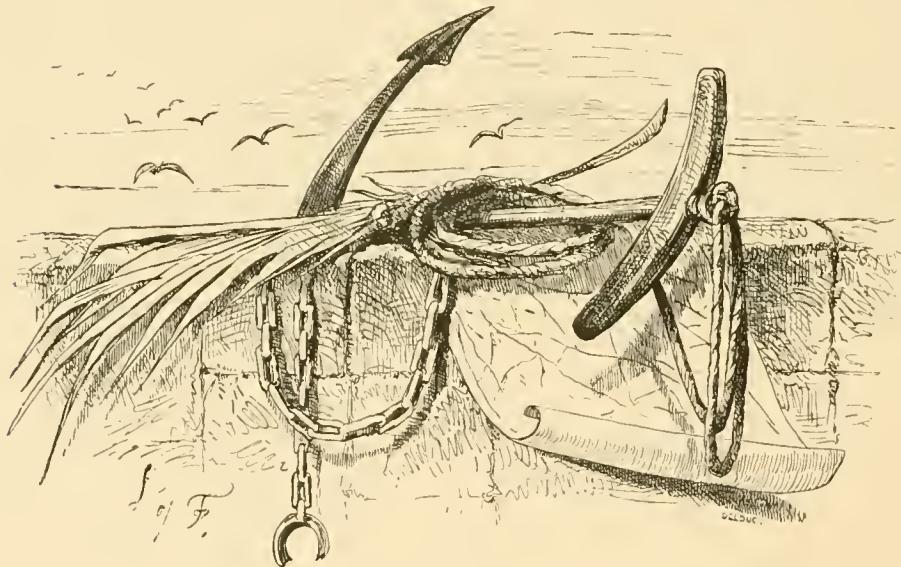
has already been noticed, was a most important ally. He and his two brothers finally decided to assist, with their means and by their personal example, in the manning of the caravels and in their adventurous cruise.

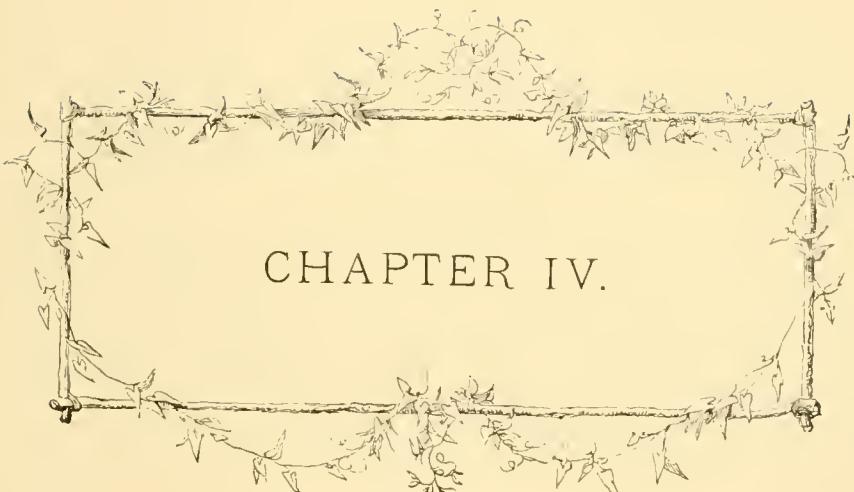
From this time all went smooth. Difficulties vanished, murmurs ceased, friends and relations listened to reason. Officers and sailors put themselves in readiness; their business, their religious duties,—all, to use the nautical phrase, were *cleared*. It was now the early morning of Friday, August 3d, 1492. Columbus, having kept his vigil of arms at the monastery, went down to the harbor through a tearful

and excited, but respectful throng. He hailed the *Pinta*; and standing erect on the poop-deck, his sonorous voice bade set all sail "in the name of Jesus Christ."

The convent bell in the distance rang the morning mass. Juan Perez, from the summit of the cliff, sent a parting benediction to his friend.

The breeze blew fresh from the east. The three ships passed the bar of the Odiel, now often shown to wondering pilgrims; the sky and the sea were alike propitious. The last difficulty had been overcome.





CHAPTER IV.



THE SURRENDER OF GRENADA.

CHAPTER IV.

"IN the name of our Lord Jesus Christ: Most noble, most Christian, most virtuous and potent princes, King and Queen of Spain and of the islands of the sea, our sovereign lords: In this present year of 1492, after your Highnesses had brought to a conclusion

the war against the Moors who bore rule in Europe, and had terminated that war in the great city of Grenada, * * * * where I saw the royal banners of your Highnesses floating, by force of arms, over the towers of the Alhambra, and where also I saw the Moorish king come down to the city gates to yield himself up and to kiss your Highnesses' hands. * * * * Presently thereafter, in the month now instant, and after the tidings which I had given to your Highnesses of the countries of India * * * * you determined as Catholic Christians and as lovers and propagators of the holy Christian faith, to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the said countries of India, to see the princes and the peoples thereof and the lands possessed by them, and the state of all things therein, and the means whereby might be worked their conversion to our holy religion. Your Highnesses commanded me not to go eastward by land, * * * * but on the contrary to take the Western route, by which we know not positively to this day that any man hath passed. Therefore your Highnesses bade me set sail with a sufficient equipment of ships and men for the said countries, and upon this occasion, of your great grace, ennobled me, so that henceforward I should call myself *Don*, and should be Grand Admiral of the Ocean Sea, and Viceroy and Perpetual Governor of all the islands and countries discovered and conquered by me in the said Ocean Sea; and you decreed that my eldest son should succeed me, and that it should be thus from generation to generation forever. * * * * I came then to the town of Palos, which is a port of the sea, where I made ready three ships of a fitting size for such an enterprise, and sailed from the said port, well furnished with much provision for the voyage and with many sailors."

Thus began the precious Memoirs of Columbus, which his friend,

LA GRANDE PARTIE DU FILM



the worthy but somewhat stupid Las Casas, unluckily abridged, giving us the original text only of a few parts, among others of the commencement. This latter fragment is the more valuable, as it confirms the sagacity of Columbus in two points. The first is his careful enumeration and insistence upon the rights and titles accorded to him. The second relates to a point on which many well-intentioned historians have represented him as blindly venturesome.

In fact, many writers seem to have thought that they would add to Columbus' glory by exaggerating the small size and bad condition of the ships in which he undertook his first voyage of discovery. The truth is now better known on this head, as it is on many others; and it appears that Columbus did nothing imprudent, considering his aim and the circumstances in which he was placed. It might, indeed, be foolish for an Admiral of our own time to undertake, with such scanty means, so hazardous an expedition; but a navigator of the fifteenth century could have demanded no better equipment.

The *Santa Maria*, which Columbus commanded in person, and which he often wished of smaller burthen, was flush decked, with double deck, fore and aft. She was four-masted, with two sails square-rigged, and two lateen-rigged, and her keel was ninety feet long. She had a crew of sixty-six men, the most important of whom were Diego de Arana, a nephew of the Admiral's wife, who went as Grand Alguazil of the squadron, and four other royal functionaries, one of whom, Bernardin de Tapia, was a historiographer who tried in vain to be an historian.

Next in rank came two lieutenants; Nino, a capital sailor and a man of great firmness; Juan Perez Matheos, whose head was as

bad as his heart; Roldan, as worthless as he, and destined to betray the Admiral; then several officers of lower grade, among whom was Juan de la Cosa, afterwards celebrated by his hydrographic undertakings; then an interpreter, who spoke all languages except those which he would have to interpret; and finally two enthusiastic friends of Columbus, who were serving as volunteers, or, as they would now be termed, amateurs.

Several of the crew were Genoese: two were Portuguese, one an Irishman, and one an Englishman. Not one was from Palos; either because of Columbus' remembrance of the opposition which he had encountered, at the last moment, from the inhabitants of that city, or because the townsmen preferred serving under the orders of the Pinzons, their compatriots.

The *Pinta* and the *Nina* were decked only fore and aft, like most caravels. The elder of the brothers Pinzon commanded the former, having as lieutenant his brother, Francis-Martin, and as surgeon, our old friend Garcia Hernandez, the friend of Perez de Marchena, and one of Columbus' first and warmest disciples. The crew of the *Pinta* consisted of thirty men.

That of the *Nina* was but twenty-four strong; but by Columbus' own showing, and as the event proved, she could carry four times as many. The *Nina* was commanded by Vincent Yañez Pinzon. Like the *Pinta*, she was at first lateen-rigged, but afterwards the sails were changed to square ones.

All the ships were provided with artillery according to their size, and with a year's provisions. Their equipment was such that the Admiral had declared them, as we have heard, well-adapted for the enterprise in hand. Concerning one of them, however, he had entertained fears which were justified on the third day out. On the sixth

of August, when they were more than sixty leagues from Palos, a heavy surge struck the helm of the *Pinta* with such violence as to render it useless. This it is believed, was the fault of the shipwrights, who hoped that this accident, which they foresaw must happen, would cause the abandonment of the expedition. The Admiral strongly suspected that the injury was not wholly due to the waves. He steered at once for the Canaries, by a reckoning opposed to that of the best sailors in the squadron, and dropped anchor off Teneriffe, after a rapid voyage.

But though his superiority in nautical knowledge was now established, the inconvenience and danger of the stay were none the less great. The King of Portugal, who saw the honor of the enterprise passing to a rival monarch, had time to send out three caravels, with orders to put every obstacle in the way of the voyage, and, if necessary, to proceed to violence. The character of the Portuguese sovereign was well known to Columbus; but this new instance of his treachery was brought to light by one of those *rencontres*, so frequent in the history of the great discoverer, and in which he always recognized the manifest protection of Providence.

The *Pinta* had been repaired, and the squadron amply furnished with fresh provisions, had set sail, in spite of the feeble and shifting breeze, when, opposite the island of Ferro, the Admiral learned from the Commander of a ship which had just left that island by what a danger he was threatened. The calm which kept him in the neighborhood of the enemy added to his peril. He was not a man to fear the shock of battle; but like all truly great men, he did not love danger for danger's sake; and the most glorious victory would in this case have so damaged his ships that they could not proceed on their enterprise. It was necessary at all hazards to avoid an engagement;

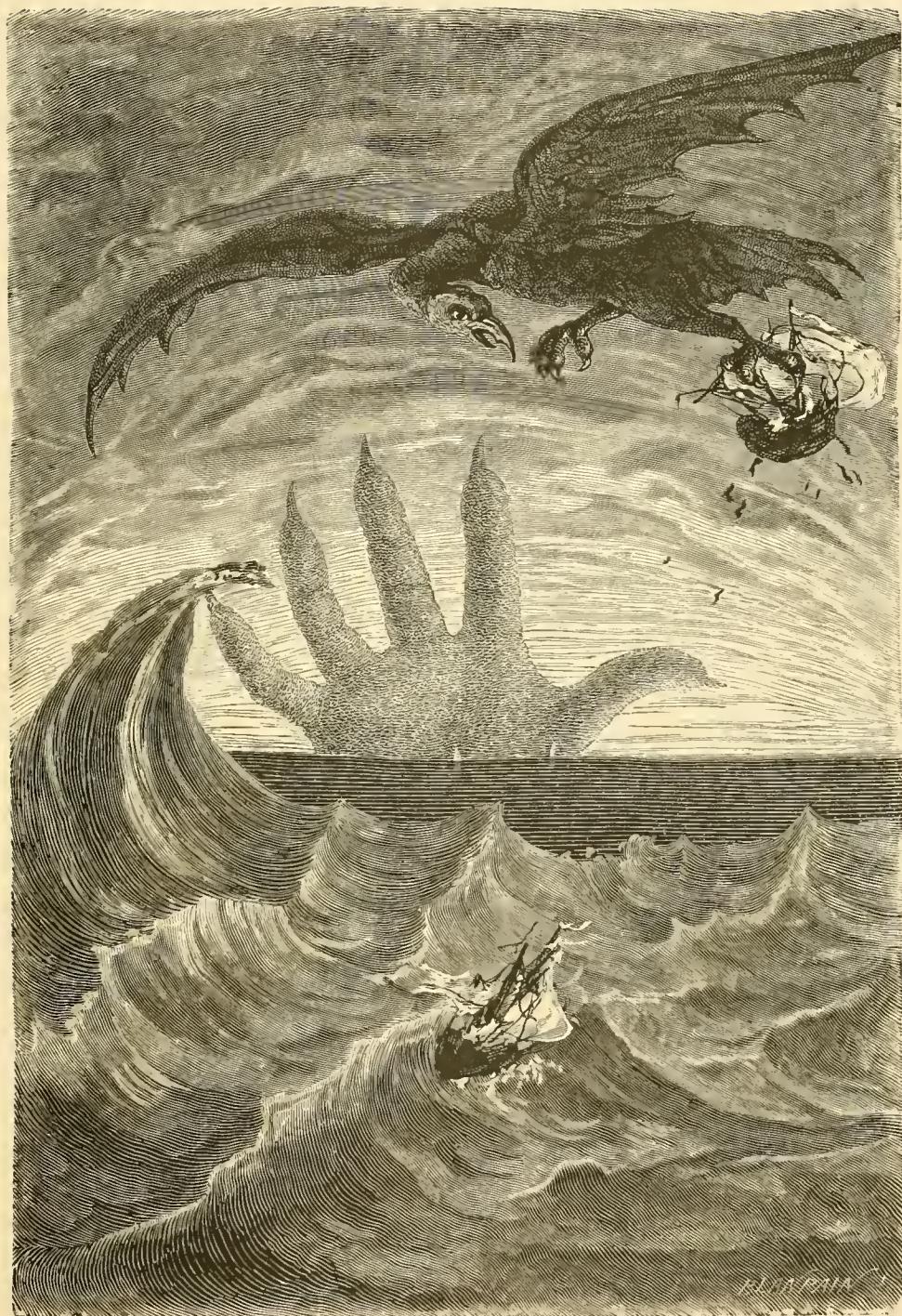
though his crew would probably have welcomed it as the alternative of the dreaded voyage of discovery. To the stagnant sea and sluggish breeze was now added, to increase their forebodings, the sight of an eruption from the Peak of Teneriffe, which vomited cascades of flame and black whirlwinds of smoke.

To calm their fears, Columbus recalled to his crew the harmless eruptions of Etna and Vesuvius, which some of them had seen, and bade them not to lose heart on account of the calm, but to put their trust in Him who maketh the wind to blow where He will; and in fact, upon the morning of the second day the wind set in from the north-east, and had soon borne the three caravels out of reach of the burning mountain, and far away from the treacherous island.

As to the piratical barks sent by the King of Portugal, Columbus knew well by experience that they would not dare to pursue him in the direction in which he was now sailing. Between him and them were already whitening the first billows of those immense and trackless seas of whom all the world but himself stood in awe. He had reached the limit where the boldest stopped; and to him it was but a point of departure for the unknown.

Here the voyage of discovery was really to commence. Here opened that great book on every page of which the imagination of mankind had displayed alike its longing and its horror for the unknown, in emblems of pleasure or of fear, of sublimity or *grotesquerie*, according to the spirit of each age and generation.

Greece had drawn upon its leaves, in a few classic outlines, the half-effaced imprint of her genius and beauty. The Orient of the Caliphs spread out there the artful confusion of its arabesques, its dogmas and its tales. India and ancient Egypt portrayed their processions of brute-gods and fish-gods, and flower-goddesses floating on



THE PHANTOMS OF FEAR.

seas of milk and wine, from whence arose the fatal beautiful sphinx. Then came the Middle Age, and with its finger dipped in blood and ink, drew upon the pages myriads of spectres and demons; and called its work, on all the charts of the time, the Sea of Darkness.

On this sea, over which hung perpetual twilight, fading into darkness towards the West, wandered, swam, circled, or glided all the monstrous children of Fear. The immense nautilus with membranous sails, which with one blow from its living oar could have capsized the *Santa-Maria*; the sea-serpent with crest of cock, fifty leagues in length; Homer's sirens, constantly pursued by the cruel water-monk (*moine-marin*) in whom the Breton sailors still believe; and the fearful sea-bishop, with his phosphorescent mitre. Harpies and winged monsters skimmed the surface of this motionless sea, choosing their prey



THE SEA BISHOP AND THE MERMAIDS.

from the troops of sea-lions and tigers, of sea-elephants and hippocampi, who grazed among the vast meadows of aquatic herbs, from which no ship could have extricated herself.

And even this was comparatively nothing; with skill and boldness, and great good fortune, one might perchance escape unharmed; but after evading the famous sea-unicorn, which with its spiral lance could have pierced the three caravels at a blow, there remained to be confronted foes and dangers too great for the strength of man.

From the midst of this chaotic ocean rose a colossal hand, covered with hair and armed with claws; the hand of Satan, the Black Hand. Of this there could be no doubt, as this hand was portrayed on all the maps of the time.

From the bottom of the watery abyss rose at regular intervals the mountainous back of the kraken, like a gathering island; an island, some said twice, others thrice as large as Sicily. This immense polyp, furnished with innumerable suckers, any one of which could have stopped short the *Pinta* as she ran before the wind, rose to the surface every day, spouting from its nostrils two columns of water six times as high as the Giralda of Seville. Then by a tremendous inhalation of air, it created a whirlwind in which the *Nina* would have spun around like a top. But the poor kraken was not suffered to disport itself on the surface of the waters. A hand of iron, the Black Hand, plunged it again into the abyss, and the double movement of this living lungs of the globe caused the phenomena of the tides.

The kraken was not malignant; but it could not be denied that his enormous dimensions made him somewhat inconvenient for Columbus' three little ships to encounter. But if this danger could be avoided, and if the Arch-fiend did not dare to lay his Black Hand upon the squadron whose flag bore the holy emblem of our Saviour

on the Cross, and whose patron saint was the Holy Virgin, what escape could there be from the terrible double-headed eagle, with wings of such enormous circumference; or from the formidable roc, whom an Arabian traveller had seen carrying in its claws a vessel manned by a hundred and fifty men?

Nor was this traveller the only witness to the existence of this fearful bird. Two sailors on board of the *Pinta*, who had long been prisoners in the hands of the infidels, had known at Samarcand the famous Sindbad, celebrated through all the east; and had heard him swear that no reward could tempt him to essay the Sea of Darkness, the home of the monster, where it lay in wait for its human prey.

These fables and others like them, for which the sailor of our day has substituted Mother Carey's chickens and the Phantom Ship, were not regarded by Columbus with the absolute disbelief of a modern. He was even surprised that the sailors, in spite of their superstition, had consented to a voyage through these regions of gloom. He was well nigh sure that the event would soon dissipate these illusions; and as he sailed westward, the sights and sounds of the voyage were assuredly the reverse of diabolic.

Before any of his comrades had noted the difference between the Eastern and Western hemispheres, Columbus, gifted with powers both of keen observation and just reflection, had felt that he was in a New World.

A temperature less variable, and constantly refreshed by a light breeze; an atmosphere impregnated with the life-giving smells of the sea, and with a magnetic current whose power was soon to become manifest over the needle of the compass; waters salter, more crystalline, and more phosphorescent; skies more glowing by day, and revealing ever new stars by night: these were some of the phenomena

which gladdened his poet-heart. He hardly slept; but, sitting or standing on the poop-railing, his eyes on the astrolabe or the tiller, with the lead or the pen in his hand, throwing his soul into every detail, wondering, calculating, praying, working, writing, he kept his log-book with the punctuality of a professional pilot.

Indeed, after the 9th of September, he kept two logs. One of them, full of exact and graphic detail, was reserved for his own eye. In the other, which was open to the officers and crew, their distance from the Old World was systematically understated.

This precaution had become indispensable. The superstitious terrors so promptly banished by the smiling calm of sea and sky were succeeded by other forebodings, to which the imperfect science of that day could find no answer.

Even the more enlightened members of the expedition, such as Garcia Hernandez, the brothers Pinzon and Juan de la Cosa, who had no fears of the difficulty of the homeward voyage, caused by the convexity of the globe, and who did not show the apprehensions of many theologians and some few among the sailors, that, on passing a certain point, they would fall into the moon, by the displacement of their centre of gravity:—even these men had a lingering fear of hindrance from “that pear-shaped protuberance to the northwest of the Ocean Sea, at the summit of which was the Terrestrial Paradise.” Columbus himself shared the belief on which this fear was based.

An additional cause of apprehension was the steadiness of the wind from the East, which seemed to be characteristic of these longitudes, and which would render the return exceedingly difficult.

Moreover, of the many evil reports which had been spread concerning the Western Hemisphere, some might still be true; that Grassy Sea, for instance, vaguely described by the ancients, might

not the banks of marine herbs along which they had already coasted be only an outlying district of it?

Finally, the compass itself—that marvellous guide, recently discovered, but already established as infallible—the compass itself had varied! How could they trust themselves henceforward, in countries where the laws of Nature ceased to operate?

Fortunately, Columbus had an answer for everything. The variation in the compass had taken him by surprise, and for a while he had kept it a secret; and by the time when he saw it discovered, his readiness had suggested to him a daring and plausible explanation. "It was not that the magnetic needle had lost its virtue, but that the polar star had altered its position in the heavens."

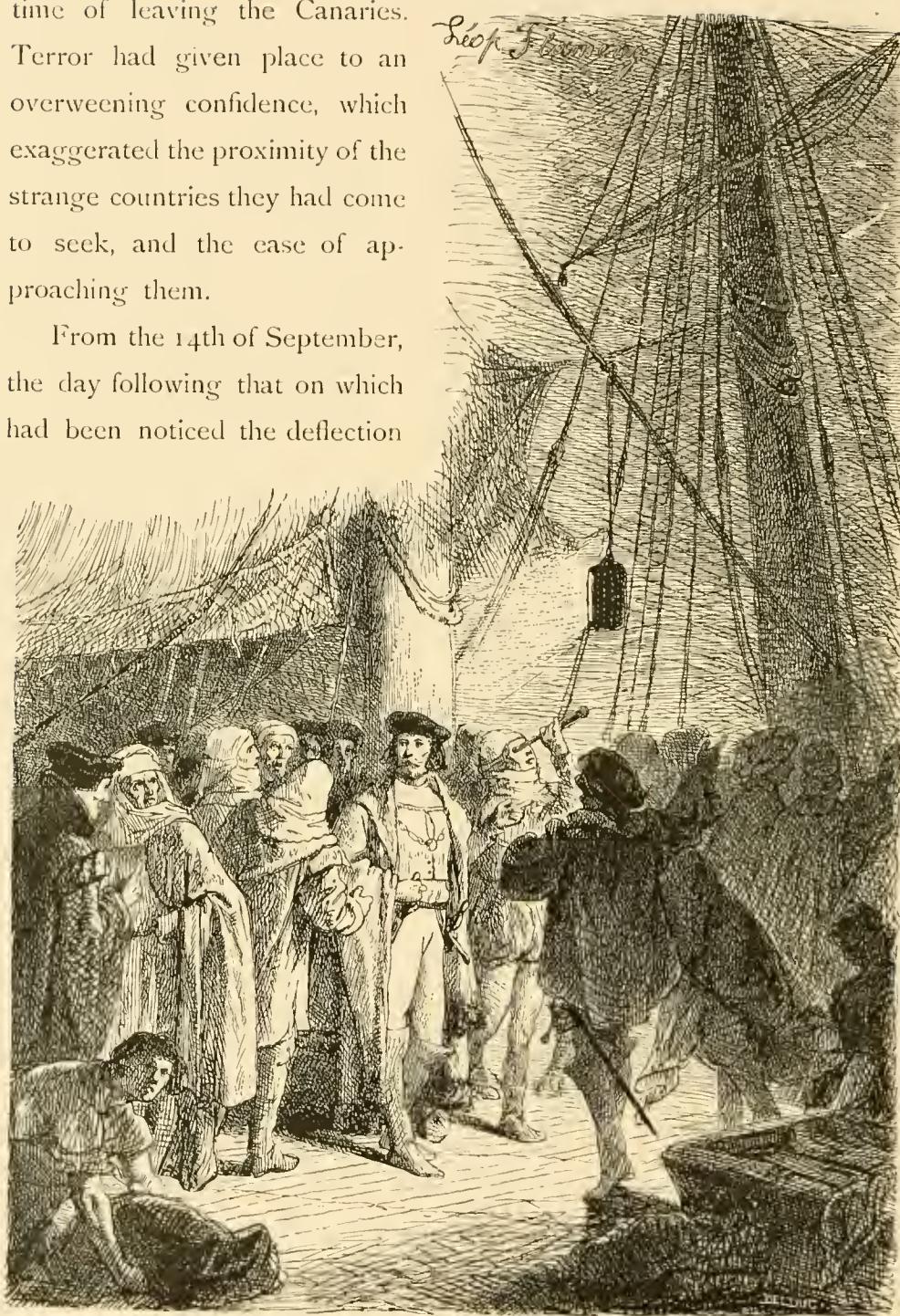
If Columbus himself had been the dupe of his explanation, we might be pardoned a smile; but we find that in his note-book, he has stated, in a scientific manner, the knotty question which, before his crew, he cut like an Alexander.

But, as we have already said, he is rather to be compared to the son of Laertes than to the son of Philip. Like the wise protégé of Minerva, he diligently practised the maxim: "*Help thyself, and Heaven will help thee.*" His explanation of the curious behaviour of the compass was equal to any of the artifices by which Nemo imposed on the stupid Polyphemus, and his device of a double log-book leaves far behind the most subtle stratagems of Ulysses. For the rest, like the wily Greek, he was in command of men so far his inferiors in courage and intelligence that he was obliged to treat them like children. They would have become unmanageable, as it was, but for the strokes of good fortune which he had deserved by his self-reliance.

All had gone well during the first days of the cruise, from the

time of leaving the Canaries. Terror had given place to an overweening confidence, which exaggerated the proximity of the strange countries they had come to seek, and the ease of approaching them.

From the 14th of September, the day following that on which had been noticed the deflection



THE DECK OF THE SANTA-MARIA

of the needle, the atmosphere became so warm and balmy, and the mornings especially so soft and radiant, that Columbus compared them to Andalusian weather; nothing was wanting, he said, but the nightingale's song. The nights, too, were delicious. The stars shone clear, and there was a constant apparition of brilliant meteors. One of them, by its size and the unusual length of its vaporous wake, gave the sailors some affright; but the Admiral saw in it a wondrous branch of fire, a celestial palm, the presage of an approaching triumph.

Numerous indications seemed to confirm the omen. On one day, the sailors aboard the *Nina* would see a sea-swallow or a ring-tail flying past; and it was well known that such birds never were met with more than twenty-five leagues from shore. The next day, birds of the same species would be seen flying westward; and Martin Alonzo Pinzon would set all sail in the direction of their flight, hoping that the *Pinta* would be first to make that land which was still so far distant.

The further they sailed, the more did the signs of land increase. Singing birds came to perch on the yards and in the rigging of the masts, which they took for floating trees. Their twittering did not affect Columbus alone. The hearts of his crew opened to the presence of smiling hope.

The marine plants now were covered with living shell-fish. One morning, a number of boobies, flying towards the south-east, passed over the *Santa Maria*, and the Admiral, sharing the common illusion, called attention to the supposed fact that all the birds of this species sleep on land, and seek the sea at daybreak in search of food; there must, then, be land to the north-west; but in spite of these indications, and of the prayers of his followers that he would change his course in reliance upon them, he continued to pursue the route

to India. In vain they insisted, in vain they pressed him: "The weather is fair," said he, "and, if it please God, we will see all this on the way home."

As he pronounced these last words with the confidence which never deserted him, several sailors shook their heads in sign of doubt; and among them the lieutenant Matheos, whom Columbus had already learned to consider as the worst of the crew. To the Admiral's stern look he ventured to make answer that the persistence of these trade-winds, a phenomenon then so little known as not to have received a name, would certainly render their return impossible.

Columbus, according to his custom, made no answer, except to repeat "with God's help." The lieutenant smiled; but not long afterwards, he was put to shame by the arising of a strong breeze from the west. Soon, however, a new cause for apprehension arose. The ships had now entered into the region of those enormous banks of fucus, whose surface is seven times as large as the kingdom of Spain. Encumbered as they were by this stagnant ocean, they were still further embarrassed by a dead calm, which totally arrested their progress, and threatened them prospectively with all the horrors of famine.

This trial of courage was doubly strenuous, for the fucus-banks had figured vaguely among the traditions of the Sea of Darkness. But, once again, Providence came to the help of the great navigator, against the lamenting, protesting, half-threatening Matheos; while yet no breeze was blowing, of a sudden the sea was moved into billows, as if its sluggish depths were stirred by a submarine tempest.

The first effect of this phenomenon was frightful enough; for even Matheos, who believed not in God, believed in the devil; he

believed not in the genius of Columbus, but he believed in the kraken, and trembled at the vision of the Black Hand outlined against the red sky of sunset.



THE CONSPIRATORS.

But soon the breeze began to blow from the north west; the prows of the caravels broke their weedy chains; the little fleet was

sailing through a clear expanse of ocean; the crew hailed with joy new indications of the Promised Land; the conspirator, Matheos, laughed at his fears; and the Admiral wrote in his book these simple words, fortunately preserved by Las Casas: "Thus hath the great ocean done me service in need; a thing never before seen save in the times of the Jews, when the Egyptians set forth in pursuit of Moses, who delivered the children of Israel from bondage."

But the Spaniards of Columbus, like God's people of old, were ungrateful and hard to guide, and prone to regret the flesh-pots of Egypt. No sooner were they delivered from the superstitious fears which had beset them since their departure, than their restless and suspicious minds turned to the protracted length of the voyage, and their fearful distance from home.

And nevertheless, on the first of October, while they believed themselves but five hundred and eighty-four leagues from the Canary Islands, they were in reality seven hundred and seven leagues away. Columbus had made more headway than he had expected at the outset; he believed that only one day's sail lay between him and India.

His error arose from a false estimate of the diameter of the earth; but a large portion of his associates suspected him already of wilful deception. Their high opinion of his intelligence forbade them to believe that he himself had been so widely astray in his computations; and they intimated that he had knowingly exaggerated the facility of his enterprise. Appearances were certainly against him; and his coolness in face of the repeated disappointments which enraged or discouraged the most valiant among the crew, lent countenance to the general suspicion. With less heroism, perhaps, he would have inspired more confidence; but greatness of heart is a quality

difficult to conceal. The world was in arms against this noble soul; and the combat was one which, on a smaller scale, is waged in the bosom of each of us. On one side was a hero, a genius, the champion of Faith, of Science, and of Light; one of those serene dragon-slayers of whom Mythology made gods, and Christianity arch-angels; on the other was Matter, the eternal Typhon, with its blind, violent forces, which found recruits even in the camp of its adversary.

And the most active recruiter was Matheos. Apart from the prejudices which have clustered around his name, impartial historians have testified to his perfidy: and we cannot doubt that he was the soul of the conspiracy against the Admiral.

This conspiracy existed in every one of the vessels, apparently with the connivance of the brothers Pinzon, who did nothing to crush it. It showed itself at first by the relaxation of discipline. The Admiral was still obeyed, though with visible repugnance; but his name was bandied with the grossest equivalents of the word impostor. He was openly murmured against; and they even went so far as to beg him to go no further in an enterprise which would lead to inevitable destruction.

He resisted with his usual firmness; and when the malcontents had given up all hope of shaking his resolution, they began to conspire his death. It was agreed that, at a day and hour fixed, he should be quietly (*accortamente*) cast into the sea.

"This dreamer," they would say on their return, "fell into the water, like the astrologer of the fable, while he was watching the course of the stars."

These details, unhappily, are authenticated; but it does not appear that there was any open attempt to carry out the criminal design. The fact of the conspiracy is well established, but the story of an open

rebellion has been confuted: and with it must fall to the ground the legend of a compromise accepted, or rather asked by Columbus.

Trois jours, leur dit Colomb, et je vous
donne un monde.

"But three days," said Columbus to them, "and I will give you a world."

Columbus never said anything of the kind, as any one will know who has had the honor of commanding a ship.

Against this felicitous but improbable verse, we have the absence of contemporary testimony, and the silence of the Admiral, whose Memoirs barely mention the insubordination, but say not a word of any revolt.

Yet it might well have come to this point, had not convincing testimony of their approach to land saved the expedition, and with it humanity, from the shame of a crime which would have long retarded the progress of the race.

On Thursday, the 11th of October, there was found floating in the sea a branch with flowers and red fruit, and, for still more cogent proof, a stick cut and curiously carved by the hand of man.

The day passed in joy and congratulation. Columbus declared that land would be in sight on the morrow. Night came at last, and through the thick darkness, the Admiral himself was the first to perceive in the west a light, to which he called the attention of a few in whom he trusted.

Then he brought together the crew, and with feelings which may be imagined, he ordered the *Salve Regina* to be sung.

The caravels were sailing slowly and with great caution, except

the *Pinta*, which was still under full sail, when from her deck a cannon shot thundered across the profound silence.

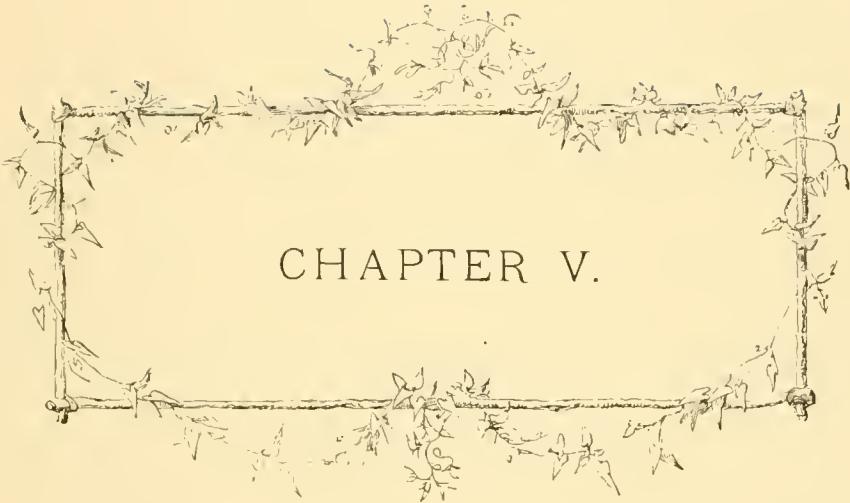
Land had been signalled by a sailor of the *Pinta* named Juan Rodriguez Bermejo.

The Admiral fell upon his knees; and with his hands raised to heaven, and tears streaming down his cheeks, his officers and sailors kneeling around him, he solemnly repeated the *Te Deum*.

Then, having prayed, he rose to his feet; while all the crew, still kneeling, with Matheos at their head, kissed the hands of the Admiral, the Grand Admiral, Don Christopher Columbus, Viceroy and Perpetual Governor of all the lands discovered in the West.







CHAPTER V.



MAKING READY TO LAND.

Jacob Litzinger Jr. Sc.

CHAPTER V.

THE rest of the night was passed on board of the three caravels in a manner which may be easily conceived. Few could sleep; they were kept awake by the excitement and pleasure of the arrival. Some of our readers may remember the feeling with which,

after a long and perilous voyage, they greeted the shores of a foreign land; and these longitudes were for nine-tenths of the Admiral's companions a region as marvellous as the Milky Way.

The ships, as a matter of precaution, were brought to. Each man was furbishing up his best. Uniforms more magnificent by far than any modern dress, were taken out of their chests; arms were burnished and put in order, more for occupation than from any supposed necessity. The ships were put into fighting condition by the ready hands of men who cared little for the dangers against which discipline bade them prepare. Victorious over Nature and the power of the Adversary, they feared not what man could do. The very sailors whom imaginary fears had almost driven to a terrible crime would now have attacked the Grand Khan and all his armies, at the bidding of their Admiral. The first to sing his praises was Matheos, and all the crew joined in the chorus. With such a leader, they feared no enemy of flesh and blood.

It must be said, in exculpation of these worthy sailors (excepting only Matheos), that we should not judge them either by the standard of their leader, or according to our modern ideas. They were no wiser than their time; and they might well falter before the superstitious phantoms which haunted even the learned men of the fifteenth century. Except by being the equals of Columbus, how could they have understood him, so long as his brow was not yet crowned by that aureole of success which to the herd is the only proof of a legitimate royalty?

We need not, then, be less magnanimous than their leader, who pardoned them even before they asked his forgiveness. What struck them the most on that memorable night was his unchanging serenity. His joy, indeed, was great, but with it was mingled no surprise, and no

mean satisfaction in his personal safety. In trial and in triumph his comrades found him equal to himself. To the mutineers he had been calm and severe; to the repentant and submissive, he was equally calm, but benignant and paternal.

At daybreak the fleet began to move. It glided before a light breeze over water so transparent that the snags which rose toward the surface were easily avoided. A road-stead, or rather a gently sloping coast, soon offered them a safer landing-place. The Admiral bade them steer towards it. He soon perceived a small island, so flat and narrow that a practised eye like his own could embrace almost its entire circumference.

The surface details, at this early morning hour, were not so easy to perceive. A light mist still concealed the colors of objects and veiled their outlines. Great meadows, wet and shining with dew, encircled a lake shimmering with blue and rose-color, with pearly reflections through the transparent veil of mist. Night and day mingled their mysterious charm to give to this *ensemble* of harmonious contrasts an ineffable serenity, the soft primitive aspect of Paradise!

Harder hearts than theirs would have been moved by such a sight, and by the expectation of the radiant scenes to be revealed by the rising sun.

At length the Titan arose, inundating with his light the hemisphere where he was still worshipped as a god, and where the emblem of Salvation, the sun of the Word, that light which lightens every man who cometh into this world, was soon to overturn the smoking altars, red with human blood.

His first beams fell upon a solitude. Meadows, lagoons dotted here and there with islets of sand, tall clumps of beautiful trees, but

no animals, wild or tame, no human habitations, no trace of cultivated soil or of industry.

Soon, however, on approaching nearer, the navigators distinguished several of the inhabitants, totally naked, who, at the sight of the ships, retired cautiously into the thickets.

They cast anchor, and let down the ship's boats. Columbus, followed by his chief of staff, like himself in the full insignia of rank, descended the ship's side, and, a few moments afterwards, was standing on the long-sought land, which had for so many ages been waiting for his coming. He knelt down and kissed the solid earth with the ardor of a lover.

The voyage had lasted from the third of August, 1492, to the twelfth of October of the same year; seventy days, of which about thirty-five were lost by the delay at the Canaries.

Columbus did not forget, when he took possession of the New World, what he owed, first to Providence, and then to the Kingdom of Spain. He addressed his comrades with that impassioned eloquence whose influence was confessed even by his enemies, and concluded by a prayer to the Almighty which has become, as it were, official, and has been repeated since on the occasion of every new discovery made by the Spaniards in the Old and the New World. Then he planted in the earth the standard of the cross, gave the island the name of San Salvador, and drawing his sword, declared that he took possession of it "in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, for the crown of Castile."

Instantly thereupon, all his assistants, with his chief of staff at their head, proclaimed him Grand Admiral, Viceroy and Governor-General, and solemnly pledged him their faithful service, beseeching him to forget their wrong-doing.



IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST FOR THE CROWN OF CASTILE.

At that moment, having recovered from the fear into which they had been thrown by so extraordinary a spectacle, several natives approached; the welcome which they received soon attracted others. There was mutual confidence and kindness between them and the crew; exchange of presents, eating together and talking together by signs, games, dancing and visits aboard began, to cease only with nightfall. Thus finished in pleasure and festivity the day which, for the poor natives, was to be followed by so many years of misery and oppression.

It was on a Friday that Columbus set sail from Palos: it was on a Friday also that he saw in the morning light the green shores of San Salvador unroll themselves to his longing eyes. Those who see in the discovery of America an event which brought misery on both worlds may therefore find a confirmation for their superstitious dislike of the day; but to those who rejoice in the union of the hemispheres under a common civilization and a common Christianity, Friday must henceforth lose its terrors.

Strange to say, this precursor of the New World, this land where civilization deposited the first germ of her bitter fruit, was first also to be neglected and forgotten. It was inaccurately designated even in the first map of the new discoveries, a map prepared by one of the companions of the great navigator.

There is but one explanation for this curious fact, and that explanation is a sordid one; San Salvador contained no gold.

Long after its discovery, when there was an effort, in the interests of science, to identify its precise position, some thought it one of the Turks' Islands; others the greater Inagua, others again the lesser Inagua, and most located it as Cat's Island; for such is the noble name with which the English have rebaptized the island of San Salvador.

Thus was it for centuries, so that in 1836 the author of *Cosmos* remarked: "History has carefully preserved the surnames and Christian names of the sailors who lay claim to have been the first discoverers of a portion of the New World; yet we are hardly able to identify the very lands with which their names are thus connected!"

"Fortunately," he added, "I find myself able to remove these doubts." And thereupon he offered a version of the facts which the weight of authority justly attached to his name caused to be generally accepted, but which we are now able to supplement by the knowledge of this generation. The definitive solution of this problem has recently been given by M. Adolph de Varnhagen.

The island whose aboriginal name of *Guanahari* was changed by Columbus to San Salvador is that which appears in our maps as *Mayaguani*.

And thus has been fixed at last the geography of this wandering island. Like the floating Delos, the birthplace of Apollo and Diana, it has borne more than one name. And who knows whether the graceful myth of Latona is not a veil cast by a poet over the harsh doubts of some ante-historic critic?

For, according to this poet, it was not science which went astray, but the island of Delos. Poetry is the Grasshopper, and Science the Ant; and the miserly Ant has often received, without a word of thanks, such gifts from the Grasshopper.

Not long ago the Grasshopper told me a story which I cannot refrain from introducing here; trusting to the indulgence of my readers to believe that I shall fit it into my history.

Last Summer, in the middle of July, I was lying under an olive tree in my native Provence, with no other company than some thousands of grasshoppers. They were singing together, and their song

was, "Drive dull care away." Drunk with light and warmth, they sang to every passer-by the triumphal hymn of Summer. The tune awakened in me only soft thoughts and undefined images; I saw Aurora and her roses, and her tears of dew, and her old husband metamorphosed into a grasshopper, and I asked myself whether Science, which has taken from us so many fine and charming things, is worth the poetry which gave them.

And this question I was about to answer to the disadvantage of the Ant, when a last doubt made me turn to the Grasshopper.

The Grasshopper answered me in the language and after the manner of *Æsop*; and this, without the rhythm or the charm of the original, this is what it sang:

"When Jason had resolved on the conquest of the Golden Fleece, he set his comrades at work to build the ship which was to carry them to Colchis. Seeing that they put little heart into the labor, he promised them that, when the ship was ready to launch, Minerva would bestow on it the gift of speech; that it would give them sage counsel on the voyage, and would charm away the long hours on ship-board by songs worthy of the Gods."

"But when all the conditions seemed fulfilled; when the ship, rigged, armed and manned, seemed ready for the launch, it remained motionless as a stone and mute as a fish; and the Argonauts murmured against their chief. Then Minerva appeared to them."

"Jason did not deceive you," said she; "have you not forgotten some necessary equipment of your vessel?"

"Minerva is right," cried the crew with one voice; "we have forgotten the sails!"

And the sails, which were on land at the maker's, were brought and made fast, and stretched to the breeze.

But the Argo spoke not a word; and Minerva repeated her question, "Have you not forgotten something?"

"Freshwater sailors that we are," cried the crew, "we have forgotten the ballast!"

And when the ballast was brought and put in place, the ship began to flutter her pinions; her prow swelled out like the silver breast of a swan; and gliding lightly over the waters, she thrice cried, "Forward!"

The moral of this fable is that ballast is as necessary to a ship, and to a story-teller, as sails. One is the motive power, the other keeps us in the straight path of progress.

Without the sails, or wings (for they are all one) my story of a hero who was at once ant and grasshopper, savant and poet, would never have risen above technical details; but without these details, which serve so well as ballast, it would run on without substance or subject-matter, and the Ant would have good reason to mock at the Grasshopper.

The history of Columbus and of the discovery of the New World is the history of a theory confirmed by the facts; the theory and the facts being alike scientific. Hence arises the impossibility of making of it a work of imagination, a poem; and even did the subject permit, the Muse would recoil before the mass and the precise detail of the documents written by the hero's own hand. If Achilles, Ulysses and their comrades had left Memoirs as complete as those of Columbus, of Las Casas, or of Ferdinand Columbus, not to mention the letters and manuscripts which fill the archives of Simancas, we should have neither Iliad nor Odyssey; a misfortune involved in the nature of things.

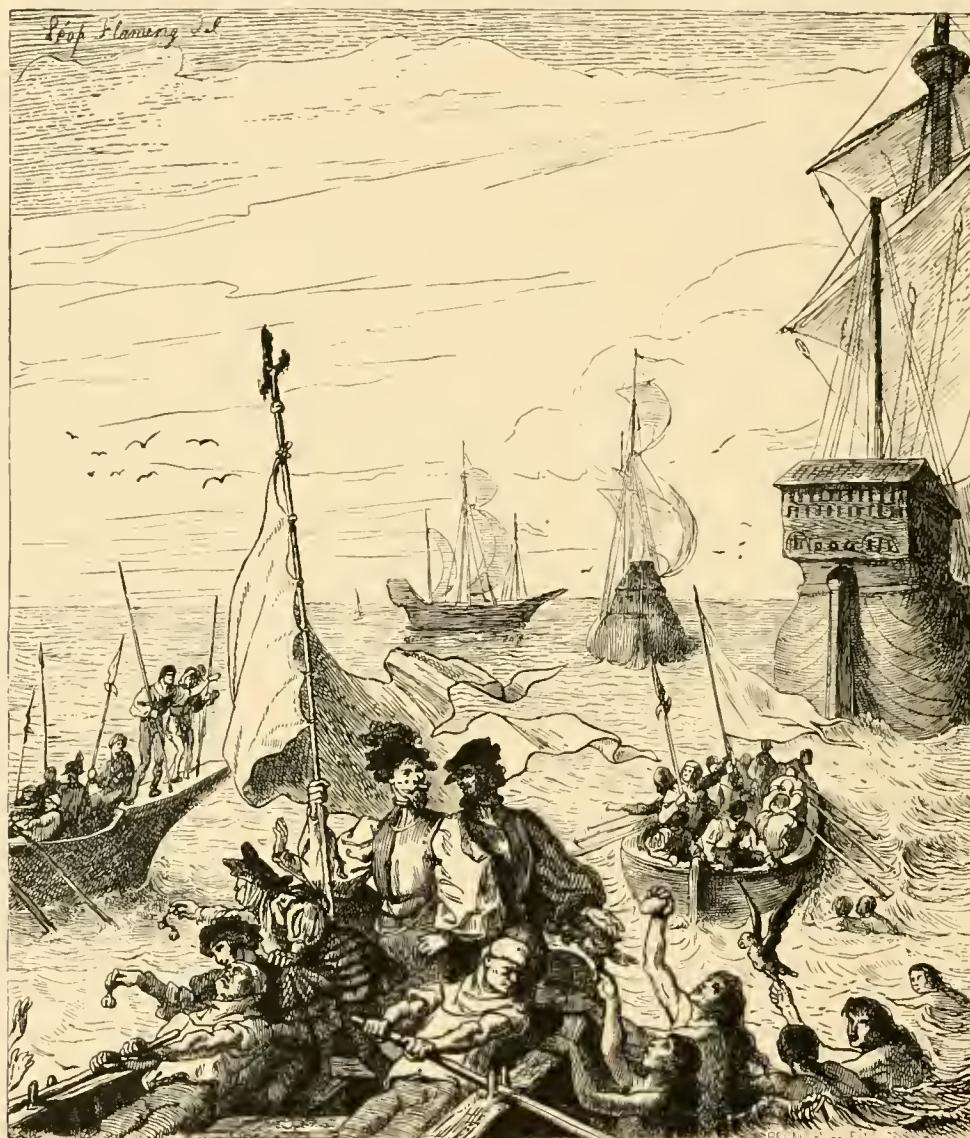
So that, even in my easy narrative, I feel sometimes reproached for introducing any touch of my own fancy, when I remember what a mine of wealth Columbus himself has left in the fresh and circumstantial relation of his impressions, when, with the same hand which imprinted upon bronze, as we shall see hereafter, lamentations worthy of Job, he set down the smallest details of his arrival in the New World. In my opinion, the best history of Christopher Columbus would be his collected writings, accompanied by a commentary which one might read or pass over according to his pleasure.

The few pages which follow will give an idea of what that history would be. We shall find in them, in all its freshness, the sum total of the impression produced, each upon the other, by two branches of the human race separated by an infinite gulf of time.

"Wishing above all things," says Columbus, "to win the friendship of the natives of this island, and being certain upon seeing them that they would trust us more entirely, and would be better disposed to our holy religion, if we used towards them rather gentleness than force, I gave to some among them bonnets of divers colors, and strings of glass beads, from which they made for themselves necklaces. I added thereunto other trifles, which so excited their joy and gratitude that we could not forbear wondering at them. When they saw us returned to our ships, they cast themselves into the water and swam to us, to offer us parroquets, balls of cotton thread, javelins and many other objects, in exchange for which we gave them glass beads, hawks'-bells and other things. They took what we gave them, and offered us all they had, which truly was very little."

"The men and the women are naked as when they came from their mother's womb. They are well made, and with pleasant faces. Their hair is as coarse as horsehair and falls over the forehead to

the eyebrows. They let it flow down behind in a long lock. * * * This hair is not curly. * * * These men are truly of a noble



PULLING BACK.

race. Their foreheads and their heads are larger than those of the other natives whom I have been able to see in my voyages; their eyes are large and beautiful, their legs very straight, * * * their

stature great, * * * their movements graceful. Some of them are painted of a dark color, but by nature they are of the same hue as the natives of the Canary Islands. Many paint themselves white or red, or of some other color. Sometimes the whole body is painted, sometimes the face or the eyes, or even the nose only. They possess no arms resembling ours, and are even ignorant of their use. When I showed them our sabres, they took them by the blades, and cut their fingers. They possess no iron. Their javelins are sticks in which are inserted fish teeth, or some other hard and pointed bodies.

"Observing that many had scars on their bodies, I asked them by signs how and by whom they had been wounded: they answered in the same way that the inhabitants of the neighboring islands often attacked them, for the purpose of carrying them away as captives, and that these wounds had been received in defending themselves. I doubted not that the inhabitants of the mainland tried to enslave them; for they were of a nature to prove faithful and devoted servants. They repeat quickly and readily what they hear, and could, I believe, easily be converted to Christianity, for they belong to no especial sect.

"At daybreak on Saturday, October 13th, we saw running along the shore many young men of good stature. * * * They approached my ship in canoes made of a single tree-trunk, and fashioned in a manner truly surprising, considering the poverty of their means. Some of these canoes could hold from forty to forty-five men, others were of less size, and some so small as to contain but one man. They have for an oar a kind of baker's shovel, which they manage very skilfully. When one of these canoes upsets, they swim around it, right it again, and bail out the water in it with calabashes, which

they carry slung around their bodies for the purpose. * * * Observing that many were adorned with a little pellet of gold, worn in a hole in the nose, I succeeded in learning, always through signs, that by sailing to the south we should discover a country whose king possessed huge vases of gold and a great quantity of the pure metal. * * * Having thereupon resolved to direct my voyage thither, on the morrow afternoon, I invited them to accompany me; but they refused, and I understood that from this country, of which they were speaking, expeditions often came to attack them. * * * The inhabitants of this island are friendly; it is true that, tempted by the strange things we showed them, and having nothing to offer in exchange, they will steal them and jump overboard with them; but they willingly give all they have for the smallest trifles of ours, even for pieces of the ship or of broken glass; I saw one of them give, in exchange for three of our smallest coins, nearly thirty pounds of cotton thread. * * * This is one of the products of this island; as I did not wish to stay there long, I was not able to learn all of them. For the same reason, and because I desire to reach Cipango, time fails me to ascertain whence the inhabitants of this island have obtained the gold which they wear in their noses. But the night is come, and they are all gone back to land in their canoes."

As he had resolved, Columbus undertook the next day to explore the coasts of San Salvador. He found everywhere among the natives the same welcome and the same customs. In some few places, they possessed huts roughly constructed in the shape of tents, delicious orchards and vegetable gardens; and in these gardens, "the most beautiful which he had ever seen," copious springs of fresh water and, as he characteristically added, "stones fit to build churches with."

The inhabitants, swimming or rowing out to the ships, pressed

him to land; but the fear of hidden reefs made him keep to the channel, and he soon found himself surrounded by such a number of islands, that he knew not which of them to touch at; "his eyes," he says, "were never weary of admiring the verdure, so beautiful and so different from ours, and such a sweet and pleasant smell came from the ground that it was the most agreeable thing in the world."

He determined at last to land on the island which seemed the largest; and took possession after the accustomed form; as at San Salvador, he raised the standard of the cross and gave this second island the name of Santa Maria de la Concepcion. Finding there neither gold nor anything else which would keep him, he continued his explorations by landing on an island which, in honor of the King of Aragon, he named Ferdinand. Here he found occasion for remarks in his usual piquant style: "In manners, in language and in every other respect," says he, "the inhabitants of Ferdinand are like those of the other islands, except that they wear some clothing, and are less shy and more cunning. * * * They can drive a bargain better than the others. I found no trace of religion among them, and I believe that they would readily become Christians, for they have great intelligence.

"The fish in these islands are wonderfully different from ours. Some of them are shaped like cocks, and their colors the brightest conceivable, blue, yellow and red; all so marvellous that there is no one alive but would take the greatest pleasure in the sight. * * *

"This island is very green; its surface is level and fertile. I saw on it many trees, some like those of Europe, but most of them as different as day from night. Thus, for instance, on one of these trees, one branch would have leaves like those of the reed, and another like those of the mastic; and these trees which combine five or

six different forms are not grafted, one tree upon another. On the contrary they grow and flourish, in the wild condition, on the mountains and in the forests."



FIGHTING THE IGUANA.

This last observation, which was of course a mistake, is readily explained by the multitude of climbing and parasitic plants peculiar

to the flora of the New World. We need not regret the ingenuous error, since it has given us a description of the opulent vegetation of the tropics not unworthy of a Chateaubriand, a Cooper or a Humboldt.

A sight still more wonderful was soon presented to him by a new island, whose beauty induced him to name it Isabella. Its inhabitants called it *Saometo*. It was the most important he had yet touched at. He found in it large forests, spreading lakes, and birds of more brilliant color, more varied form, and sweeter song.

Here also he met beasts of considerable size; among them the iguana, a sort of gigantic lizard, whose resemblance to a crocodile, or rather to the contemporary pictures of a crocodile, caused it to be mistaken for that animal. To encourage his men, who were always frightened by the unknown, Columbus attacked the creature without hesitation; rushed on it, sword in hand, chased it to the lake and soon made an end of it. The skin, which was carried back to Europe, was seven feet long. The modern iguana does not attain such dimensions.

Columbus must have smiled more than once over this trophy, when he discovered that this fearful-looking monster, with its enormous *goitre*, its long and muscular tail, its spine serrated from end to end, and its sharp, flexible claws, is a saurian as gentle as our common wall-lizard, and such a friend to men that he makes no objection to being eaten by them.

But neither this easy victory, nor other more trying tests of courage, nor the encounter of a multitude of novel objects, which at every step gave new occupation to his mind and to his senses; nothing, in a word, which would have arrested or delayed an ordinary man, could make Columbus forget the practical object of his enterprise, nor the promises which had obtained for him the protection of

the Two Kings. The gold which had been their motive in undertaking such a scheme, which was to repay them for their coöperation, and to defray the cost of a crusade against the infidels; this was his constant pursuit.

The indications of its existence grew more and more encouraging. The natives wore larger bits of the precious metal, and one of them promised Columbus to point out to him either a vein or a considerable deposit. But on this occasion, the Admiral had his first experience of the tendency of the race to falsehood, or at least to an exaggeration which is with them less the result of calculation than of their lively imagination and defective means of expression.

The man having failed to keep his word, Columbus set sail again, after a two days' delay; and so little was he discouraged that he wrote to the Kings: "Soon—I am confident of it—soon shall I reach the very places where gold *grows*." In fact, he was not very far from Mexico; but the bloody conquest of "the place where gold grows" was reserved for another.

He did discover, however, on the twenty-eighth of October, the pearl of the seas, the Queen of the Antilles, the lovely island of Cuba; whose marvels made him forget in a moment the most charming natural scenes he had yet beheld.

The superiority of Cuba was not only in the luxuriance of its vegetation and in its wonderful flora; what struck Columbus most forcibly were the vast dimensions of the natural features. Rivers, lakes, forests and mountains had an aspect of size, of force and of majesty which attracted and enthralled the mind. Columbus confessed that he could hardly tear himself away from this world of surprise and enchantment.

The names which he gave to the striking features of the island

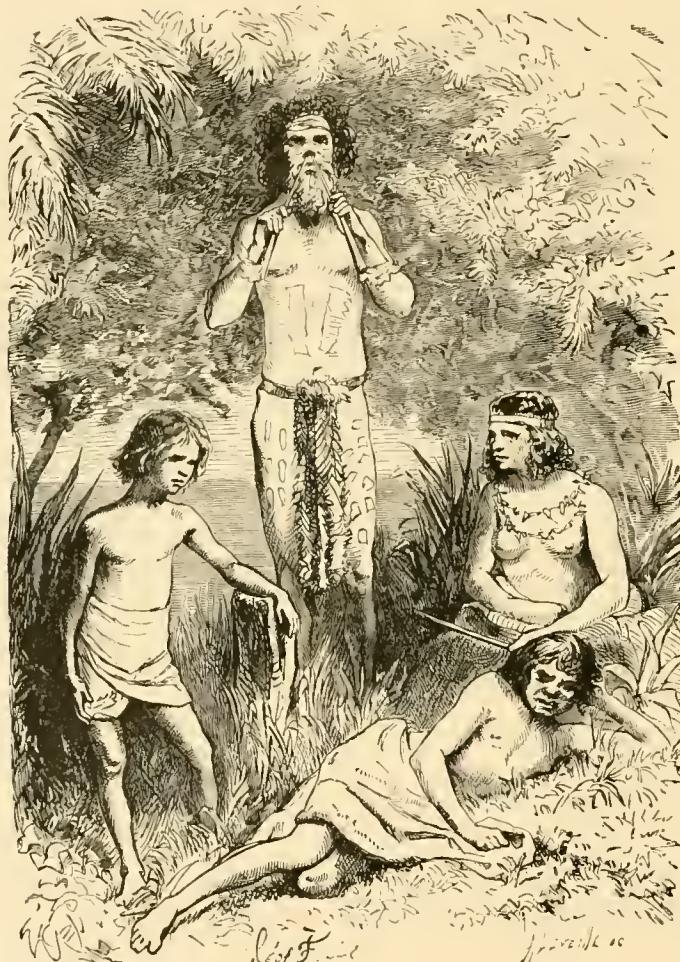
bore witness to his feelings of admiration. Most of these names have been changed, not always to advantage. He called the island itself *Juana*, a softer appellation than its present. His *Puerto-Santo* (Holy-Port) has become Baracoa; his *Cape of Palms*, *Moon River*, *Ocean River* have all been rebaptized.

Upon his approach to the latter river, the *Rio de los Mares*, the Indians whom he had on board informed him that not far off was a place named *Bohio*, where, according to their statement, gold, pearls and spices abounded. They spoke also of one-eyed men; of a certain island *Mantinino*, inhabited only by women; of men with heads like those of dogs, who ate the flesh and drank the blood of other men. The first of these stories must be ranked with the legends of Herodotus. The second had some foundation, for there was an island in these regions inhabited by women only for certain months of the year. As to the dog-headed anthropophagi, the worst part of the tale was but too true. These monsters, whose practices discredited their human form, were the very cannibals dreaded by the Lucayan islanders, and called by them *Caniba*.

Columbus, who all the while believed himself near the coast of Asia, did not doubt that the *Caniba* or *Kaniba* were the subjects of the Grand Khan; and it may be said that many etymologists have drawn as great conclusions from like evidence. He sent into the interior an embassy to that sovereign, who reported on their return that they had found, instead of Quinsay and the Grand Khan, a village of fifty huts, containing a savage but handsome tribe, who welcomed the Spaniards, and like the Indians generally, regarded them as gods descended from above.

Some of them inhaled, through a double tube applied to the nostrils, a dried herb which they called *tabago*. To this peculiarity

Columbus paid but little attention; he could not foresee that the use of this herb would one day spread over the whole world, and would prove a source of immense wealth for the inhabitants of the island.

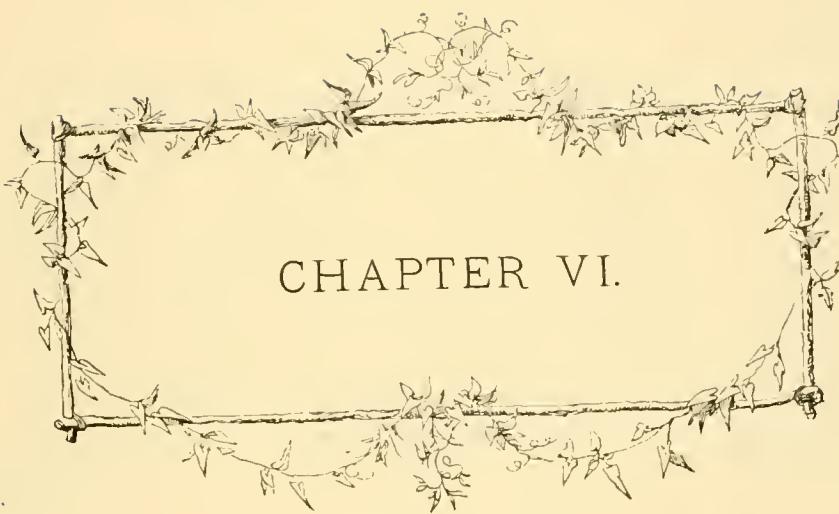


A SAVAGE ARCADIA.

Useful products were as diverse and as abundant as could be wished. Everywhere they met with spices of different sorts, with dye-woods, and with quantities of cotton, but with little of that gold upon whose discovery the efforts of the Admiral were concentrated.

This consideration decided him to leave the island of Cuba, and as soon as weather permitted, he began to coast along the shores towards the south-east. This excited great terror among the Indians, who believed that this course must soon bring them to the country of Bohio or Babeque, the modern Hayti, where dwelt the warlike and ferocious *Caniba*. Columbus, as we have seen, had reasons for hoping that they were true prophets; but once again, the main object of his search was to elude him.

The island to which he came on Friday, the 7th of December, and which he named *Hispaniola*—now St. Domingo or oftener Hayti—and in which he found so much to remind him of Spain, was indeed the mysterious Bohio or Babeque of which he had heard; but it contained few or no *Kaniba*, and the Grand Khan had never been heard of there.



CHAPTER VI.



CHAPTER VI.

WHILE the Admiral was still exploring the north-eastern coast of Cuba, which he mistook for the eastern extremity of Asia, an occurrence took place which might have had the most disastrous consequences; his little force was suddenly reduced by more than

one-third; the caravel next in size to his own, the *Pinta*, commanded by Alonzo Pinzon, had disappeared; and the fears which were at first conceived for her safety soon gave way to the painful certainty that she was a deserter.

Pinzon had already given the Admiral great uneasiness by his cupidity and insubordination; he had "played him more than one evil turn," as Columbus says in his Memoirs; and now, on the faith of information to which his superior, as he thought, attached too little importance, he determined to seek the land of gold in the north-west, and to secure for himself the sole honor of a discovery which would have cast all other achievements into the shade.

Columbus waited for him for some time, and even sent to seek him; but soon, without letting it be seen that he thought Pinzon a runagate, he pursued his voyage, in the spirit of a man who felt that no treacherous plotting, whether by a subordinate or by a King of Portugal, could now prevail against him. The power of the adversary was not yet.

And dearly did the traitor pay for his first overt act of insubordination. At first he had been Columbus' friend; then a jealous and disrespectful lieutenant; now he was in open mutiny. He thought himself, in virtue of his nobility, above obeying orders. He had been one of the most powerful men, the *ricos hombres*, of Andalusia. The time was to come when he would be glad of mercy from the poor foreigner who could hardly have launched a vessel without the help of the proud Spaniard.

While Pinzon was preparing for himself this recompense of ignominy, the Admiral pursued the course of his discoveries in the island of Hispaniola, which, to avoid confusion, we shall call St. Domingo, the name which it afterwards received.

His first landing, after taking the bearings of several points not so convenient for his purpose, was at a harbor which, by a freak of fortune, has retained its pristine name of St. Nicholas.

Here his first care was to effect an intimate and lasting alliance with the native tribes, who seemed to him far more civilized than any he had yet seen. Their skin was whiter, and their features more regular and European. They were a handsome race, especially the women. They wore some slight clothing, and with the exception of the chiefs, each man had but one wife. They had little difficulty in cultivating a soil which lent itself to their wants. They had broad, well-built roads. Their huts, which contained several rooms, and were often surrounded by rustic galleries, were neat and clean; the abodes of the chiefs were spacious and comfortable, and not wanting in a certain sort of elegance. Finally, a collection of a thousand houses which the Spaniards came upon four leagues from the coast, if it did not rise to the description of the famous Cipango, might properly be termed a city.

This city had been found completely deserted; its inhabitants had abandoned it, carrying with them their most valued possessions; but a beautiful Indian girl having been brought to Columbus, treated by him with the utmost consideration and sent to her tribe loaded with presents, an immediate change took place in their feelings. Once again, in the life of our hero, feminine influence had been brought to bear in his favor.

Yet the Admiral accords to her in his journal only a mention of some few lines; although she was of the greatest assistance to him. It may be the fault of Las Casas, that unlucky abridger, that even her name is never recorded by Columbus; Anacoana, the Flower of Gold, the first friend of the white men in the New World.

Full light has not yet been thrown on the importance of the part played by this Wild-Flower in the history of Columbus' first discoveries. She appears in greater and greater prominence as we delve into the dusty records of history; and we feel that that history will never be complete, until it has been regarded from an American stand-point.

It is at least certain that Anacoana was one of the queens and priestesses of St. Domingo; that the islanders were at first hostile to Columbus, and that her enthusiastic protection secured him their friendship. Thanks to her, he was even raised to the rank of a divinity, and placed among the gods, the *zémès*, of a religion far less simple than was at first supposed.

All was going as he would have it, when of a sudden Columbus set sail from Port Conception, where he made a long stay, and stood to the north, towards a fabled country which the Haytians assured him abounded in gold. He was driven by contrary winds to the Tortugas, a small and insignificant island, but of such ravishing beauty that he called one of its valleys *Paradise*. Beginning to distrust the native stories, he did not attempt to seek for gold in this paradise, which was soon to be turned by buccaneers into a hell; but, coasting the channel which separates the Tortugas from St. Domingo, he resumed his exploration of the Haitian coast,

He found the natives everywhere friendly, thanks to the commands of Anacoana, and to the accounts given by her messengers of the white strangers.

He had hardly dropped anchor in the Puerto de Paz, when more than five hundred Indians, and among them many beautiful women, came joyfully to meet him, with their chief at their head; thus fulfilling one of the Admiral's most ardent desires. Though this chief or cacique, as he was called, was as scantily clad as his subjects, the

superiority of his rank was shown at the first interview by the respect shown to him by his followers, and by his own dignity of manner.



THE FLOWER OF GOLD.

Columbus received him on board with military honors, and obtained from him much information, more or less useful; among other things concerning that unhappy Babeque which always fleded before the

explorers. There was evidently, on this point, a misunderstanding between the Spaniards and their Indian allies, which will probably never be cleared up.

Another friendly Cacique, who possessed a lump of gold as big as a man's fist, broke it into small pieces in order to facilitate exchanges with the white men. He told them, moreover, that he had sent after more of the precious metal, spoke of Babeque as a country not far off, and at the approach of night, went back to his home in the interior.

Two days afterwards, he returned, carried on the back of a servant, in a sort of palanquin, followed by a numerous escort, and accompanied by two old men, one of whom seemed to be his counsellor on state matters, and the other his tutor. He came to visit the Admiral, whom he found at dinner in the cabin of his ship.

Columbus received him with admirable gravity. He found that the Cacique wished to be received without ceremony, and that when invited to sit at table with his host, he took of each dish just what was necessary to avoid seeming impolite. He did the same with the liquors, which he barely tasted, and then passed them to his attendants. His manner and gestures were of remarkable dignity.

But his dignity and discretion could not resist the sight of an object which doubtless surpassed in magnificence all which had hitherto tempted him from his decorum.

While Columbus was talking with him, with the help of the San Salvador Indians, whom he had brought with him as interpreters, the Cacique became suddenly inattentive, and his eyes wandered frequently, in spite of his self-restraint, towards the Admiral's bed-covering. When Columbus instantly begged him to accept it, together with a pair of red slippers and a necklace of amber beads, the gratitude of the Cacique and his servants was boundless, and the lofty notion which

their hosts tried to give them of the power of Spain and of its sovereigns now found a ready acceptance. The Two Kings were



THE GRATEFUL CACIQUE.

taken for divinities from the skies. The time had not yet come when a great poet would put into Indian mouths these verses:

Pour moi, je les crois fils de ces dieux malfaisants,
Pour qui nos maux, nos pleurs, sont le plus doux encens.
Loin d'être dieux eux-même ils sont ce que nous sommes ;
Vieux, malades, mortels. Mais s'ils étaient des hommes,
Quel germe dans leur cœur peut avoir enfanté
Un tel excès de rage et de féroceité ?

"As for me, I believe them to be sons of those maleficent deities to whom our woes and our tears are the sweetest incense. Far from being gods themselves, they are of our own race; sick, old, and mortal. And yet, were they men, what natural human impulse could give birth to such an extreme of rage and of ferocity?"

A few months later, that rage and that ferocity were to be let loose upon this kindly, intelligent and hospitable people.

In the meanwhile, although they shared the devotion of their chiefs to the beneficent strangers, yet the constant and familiar relations into which they were brought with the sailors, had shown them that there were, at all events, inferior and superior deities, and that the inferior class was not exempt from human weaknesses. They found, moreover, that high and low alike were consumed with the desire for gold; and to humor their wishes, the Indians told them the wildest tales; sometimes of a region over which reigned a king whose banner was made of an immense plate of beaten gold; sometimes of a river whose sands were mixed with gold; farther to the East, gold was so common that one could stoop and pick it up. One old man declared that one of the islands from which he had come was a solid rock of gold.

But Columbus put little faith in these travellers' tales. "Although

this people," wrote he, "live not far from the gold-bearing country, I believe they have but little of it." And there could be no doubt that if they had possessed much of it, they would have exchanged it at once for glassware, red lacings, needles and especially for those hawks'-bells, to them the most marvellous of the Spanish possessions, whose clear joyous tinkle roused to madness their tireless passion for the dance. To be able to attach these sounding wings, these *chuq-chuq*, as they called them, to their wrists and ankles, the natives would give every thing they had; tame parroquets, bows and arrows carved with true barbaric good taste, small cotton aprons, cassava-bread, fruits, perfumes, spices and commodities of every kind.

So little calculating were they that they frequently offered these things for nothing, for the mere pleasure of giving; and Columbus justly inferred from their liberality that the gold-bearing countries were not in their possession, but in that of the Caraïbes or Caribs. No doubt they would have been glad to see the Admiral and his troop of demi-gods marching against these Caribs, the most cruel enemies of their race.

Another error into which Columbus fell was caused by a similarity of sound between Civaö, the name given to these gold-bearing regions, and the famous Cipango; a resemblance like that between Kaniba and the Grand Khan. And the most curious part of this mistake was that the veritable Cipango, which is the modern Japan, was then in a condition of such poverty that its King could not be buried with the ceremonies befitting his rank. Moreover, the people of these islands were numerous and warlike, and so inhospitable that, far from receiving strangers as gods, they had forbidden them to approach the country.

So that Columbus was more fortunate than he would have thought

himself, when he finished his exploration of the northeastern coast of St. Domingo. He received everywhere the same welcome; at every stopping-place the scenes above described were repeated; and gold appeared in larger quantities, chiefly, no doubt, on account of the higher rank of the caciques who came to pay their homage to the Admiral.

While he lay in the harbor of St. Thomas, near a river so broad that he compared it to a sea, he received a present of a belt adorned with the face of an animal with long ears, whose protruding tongue and nose were wrought in beaten gold.

In the interior, three leagues from Punta Santa, another chief received with honor a party of six men sent to him by the Admiral, and sent back as a present a small quantity of gold. Another gift came from a cacique whose name will frequently recur in this narrative. It was a huge mask, part of which was overlaid with leaves of gold.

While these presents were far from answering to the marvellous tales of Marco Polo, they evinced to the Admiral the generosity and kind-heartedness of the natives. He soon received even stronger testimony of their benevolent disposition, under circumstances of great calamity and peril.

Persuaded by all that he heard that he was near Civao, he started in search of that imaginary Ophir, across a sea full of reefs and sand-banks, where nothing answered to his preconceived ideas, but where nevertheless he abated not a whit of his vigilant and thorough exploration. Having cast anchor in a harbor apparently secure, with the water as quiet "as if in a basin," Columbus, who had been without sleep for thirty-six hours, determined to take a little rest. The tired crew were also asleep, and the steersman, as soon as the Admiral went

below, gave the helm to a novice and deserted his place at the tiller. Of a sudden the boy whom he had left in charge gave piercing cries for help.

Columbus was the first to be aroused. He saw at once that the ship had struck, and rapidly issued the necessary orders to the half-stupefied sailors. A boat was launched to carry out an anchor astern, and the mainmast was already tottering under the blows of the axes, and by its fall would have lightened the ship, when the sailors in the boat, instead of playing their part, became frightened, and pulled off to the *Nina*. The manœuvre consequently failed, and the ship was driven aground by the breakers. She became more and more top-heavy, and at last turned fairly over on one side. Fortunately the sea was not heavy, and the ship did not break; so that Columbus could transfer his crew without difficulty to the *Nina*, which had come up to his rescue, and brought him back the crestfallen sailors who had deserted him in the boat.

The ships were brought to, to await the day. The indefatigable Admiral returned on board of the shipwrecked vessel, to ascertain the extent of the disaster. He found to his sorrow that the utmost which could be done was to prevent any further injury being received. Thereupon he sent on shore two trusty men, charged to ask the help of the young cacique Guacanagari.

Then it was that the humanity and charity of the poor Indians, who met with such an evil recompense from our race, shone forth in its full beauty.

While all along the shores of the Old World, the infamous Law of Wrecks was recognized and practised—indeed, it is hardly yet obsolete,—in these far off lands, men without a written law, idolaters, savages, as a Matheos or a Pinzon would have called them, not only

saved the lives and property of strangers from the devouring ocean, but gave them every assistance in their power, and showed them the most heart-felt sympathy.

At daybreak appeared the chief and his two brothers. He put at the Admiral's disposition all his canoes, and all the strength of their oarsmen, to assist in unloading the shipwrecked vessel. He himself presided over the work, all the while consoling Columbus by constant encouragement, and placing at his command everything which he possessed. He set guards over the work of salvage; and although the least among the thousand objects which were brought to shore, and which lay for several nights in the open air, would have been a treasure to his subjects, not a single pin or nail was stolen.

And at that very day and hour, perhaps, on some European coast, a ship in desperate straits was driving upon a reef to which the treacherous lights of wreckers had drawn her; and when the destruction was complete, a horde of Christians, men, women and children, rushed upon the few survivors, as they neared the shore, with boat-hooks, pitchforks and grappling-irons, and completed the work of the sea!

No doubt Columbus had some such contrast in mind, when he wrote to his sovereigns: "These men are loving, not eager for gain; and so tractable in all things that there is not in the world any better people. Their speech is the sweetest and the friendliest ever heard, and always accompanied with a gentle smile. It may truly be said of them that they love their neighbors as themselves."

The experience which he had just had of these "natural Christians," determined Columbus to establish a military post in a place which seemed, besides, to have been pointed out by the finger of Providence. He imparted his intention to his good friend, the cacique Guacanagari, who heartily approved of it, and offered his assistance. But the

Admiral was determined, as he has told us, to give the chief and his subjects a high opinion of the power and resources of the Spaniards. He ordered his men to build a tower and a small fort over arched vaults,



THE WRECKERS AND THEIR PREY.

and to bring together in this place the ship's ammunition, with provisions, and commodities of all sorts, which might be of service to the garrison.

The work went rapidly forward under the direction of the Admiral, who was at once architect and engineer. The young Cacique watched its progress with intelligent curiosity and admiration. He had already so far adopted European customs as to wear a shirt, gloves and shoes, presents to him from his patron. As he often made mention of the man-eating Caribs whose incursions laid waste his little kingdom, Columbus determined, before leaving the country, to give him and his people a high idea of the benefits which would result to them from an alliance with Spain. A little cannon practice achieved this desired result. The Indians were even overwhelmed with terror, when they heard the noise and saw the execution done by a harquebus and a Lombard, whose balls were aimed at the hull of the *Santa Maria*.

When the fort had been constructed, Columbus solemnly consecrated this cradle of the infant colony by the name of *Natividad*, the Nativity, or as we should call it, Christmas. He raised above it the standard of Castile, and set upon a neighboring hill the first monumental cross which the New World had ever seen.

The Indians assisted at these ceremonies. Their Cacique was clad in a superb scarlet mantle, and surrounded by his nobles and priests; much to the Admiral's surprise and edification. His heart was glad within him when he saw the respectful attitude of his allies, and marked their frequent use of the sign of the cross, which seemed to promise a rapid conversion to that holy religion whose moral precepts were already exemplified in their lives.

It was, therefore, a double grief to him to feel that he must set his face homeward; but the loss of one of his ships, and the crippled condition of another, left him little choice. He selected the garrison of his post with great care. It consisted of forty-two men, most of them veterans, under the command of his nephew, Diego de Arana;

and after this, having done his best to provide for every contingency, and having bestowed on the little colony his wisest and most paternal instructions, he took leave of the inconsolable Guacanagari, and on Friday, the fourth of January, he set sail for Europe in the *Nina*. The little ship carried more than Cæsar and his fortunes.

They had hardly gotten out of the channel, when the wind shifted, and became so contrary that they had to keep close to shore. Columbus profited by the delay to make a careful geographical survey of this beautiful coast. At the foot of a mountain which he called Monte Cristo, just as he was entering the harbor of the same name, a cry from the topmast announced the appearance of the *Pinta*, which came towards them directly before the wind.

Making a virtue of necessity, the elder Pinzon soon came alongside of the Admiral, to whom he sought to explain his desertion as having been caused by stress of weather. Columbus listened without remark; but wrote that night in his journal that, "once his mission was finished, he would endure no longer the affronts of impudent and wicked men, who assumed to follow their own will against him who did them so much honor."

Nor did Pinzon by his conduct forfeit the esteem of the Admiral only; his reputation as a sailor was lessened in the eyes of the crew, when it was seen that, in his eagerness after gold, he had neglected to renew a rotten mast, and had allowed the *teredo* to burrow undisturbed into the hull of the ship.

The damage done by this worm, added to a leak in the *Nina*, long detained the expedition, and exposed it to the force of storms, from which, by greater promptitude, it would have escaped.

During this inevitable delay, Columbus did not lose his time. He explored the northern coast of St. Domingo as far as the Gulf

of Samana, and at the same time gave a sharp lesson to the natives of the Ciguayan tribe, who had attacked a Spanish detachment.

This was the first blood shed by Europeans in the New World; but the cause was a good one, and as no lives had been lost, Columbus had the satisfaction of seeing a good understanding re-established between his command and the natives, whom he regarded as alike his children.

In the meantime, while he was seeking in the south-east that island of the Amazons, which is supposed to have been Martinique, the wind shifted in his favor, and he turned the ship's head to Spain, in the name of the Holy Trinity; hoping, as he said, in spite of the condition of his caravels, that the same God who had conducted him thither would bring him again to haven.

The weather during the first week was encouraging; but from the twenty-first of January there were constant changes in the rhumb-line; calms and squalls succeeded each other after a fashion which threatened to retard his voyage indefinitely. The *Nina* had constantly to take in sail and wait for the *Pinta*, which was sailing almost close to the wind.

Two weeks later, nevertheless, the pilots declared they were close to the Spanish coast. Columbus maintained that they were a hundred and fifty leagues out of their reckoning, and the event proved too clearly that he was right. Just at the time when, according to their calculation, the ships should have been entering harbor, there burst upon them a storm which, for three days in succession, kept them in expectation of immediate shipwreck.

The *Pinta*, which was no longer in condition to hold the wind, scudded before it with bare poles. She answered once to the nocturnal signal of the *Nina*; but soon afterwards disappeared in the night.

At last the danger seemed so great that the Admiral determined

to write upon parchment a brief account of his discoveries, and to throw it into the sea, with the precautions usually observed in such cases.

Having thus done his best to provide for the perpetuation of his achievement, his mind became tranquil, and he awaited with calmness the worst which might happen.

On Friday, February the fifteenth, land appeared in sight which the pilots thought to be the Spanish coast, but which the Admiral declared to be one of the Azores.

Again he proved to be right. It was the island of St. Mary's, and a possession of the Portuguese. He was compelled by the condition of his ship to come to anchor off the coast, although he felt great doubt of his reception.

A number of his men went on shore, to perform a vow made during the force of the tempest. They had no sooner set foot on land than the governor caused them to be arrested. Columbus, as was afterwards discovered, would have had the same fate, had he left the *Nina*; but he was careful not to do so. Finally, having failed to entrap the Admiral, the governor sent back the captured sailors, and the *Nina*, which had not even been revictualled, was compelled to take the sea again in a furious storm.

This storm was the most terrible known on the Atlantic within the memory of man. Off Flanders alone, twenty-five Spanish ships perished.

But the little *Nina* had a better fate. Running under bare poles, with her head to the storm, she grazed the terrible Rock of Cintra, and, across a thousand dangers, forced the difficult entrance to the Tagus. Once again Columbus had achieved the impossible.

While his crew were lamenting to see themselves in the power of the King of Portugal, he was inditing to that monarch a letter such

as he only could write; and the prince, disarmed by his eloquence, and perhaps dreading the vengeance of Spain, sent for the Admiral, treated him with the greatest consideration, caused him to be presented to the



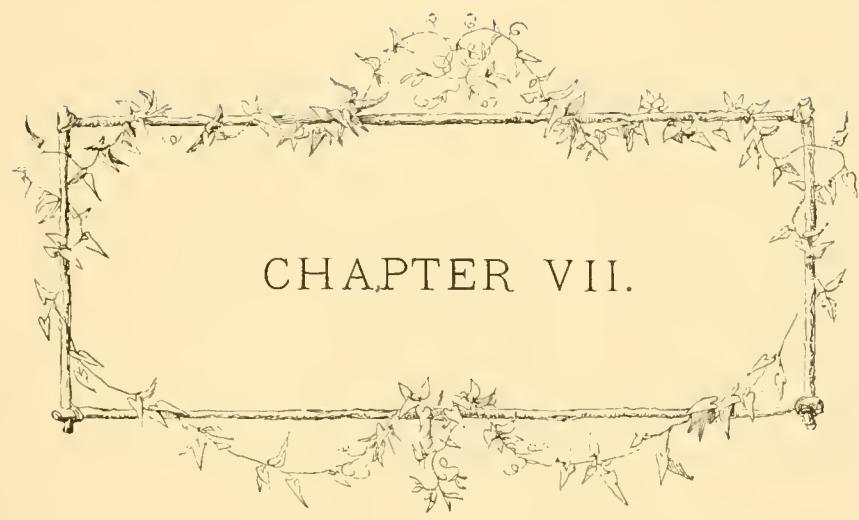
COLUMBUS BEFORE THE SOVEREIGNS OF PORTUGAL.

Queen, who listened with delight to his narration, and at length, after some hesitation, permitted him to depart for Spain.

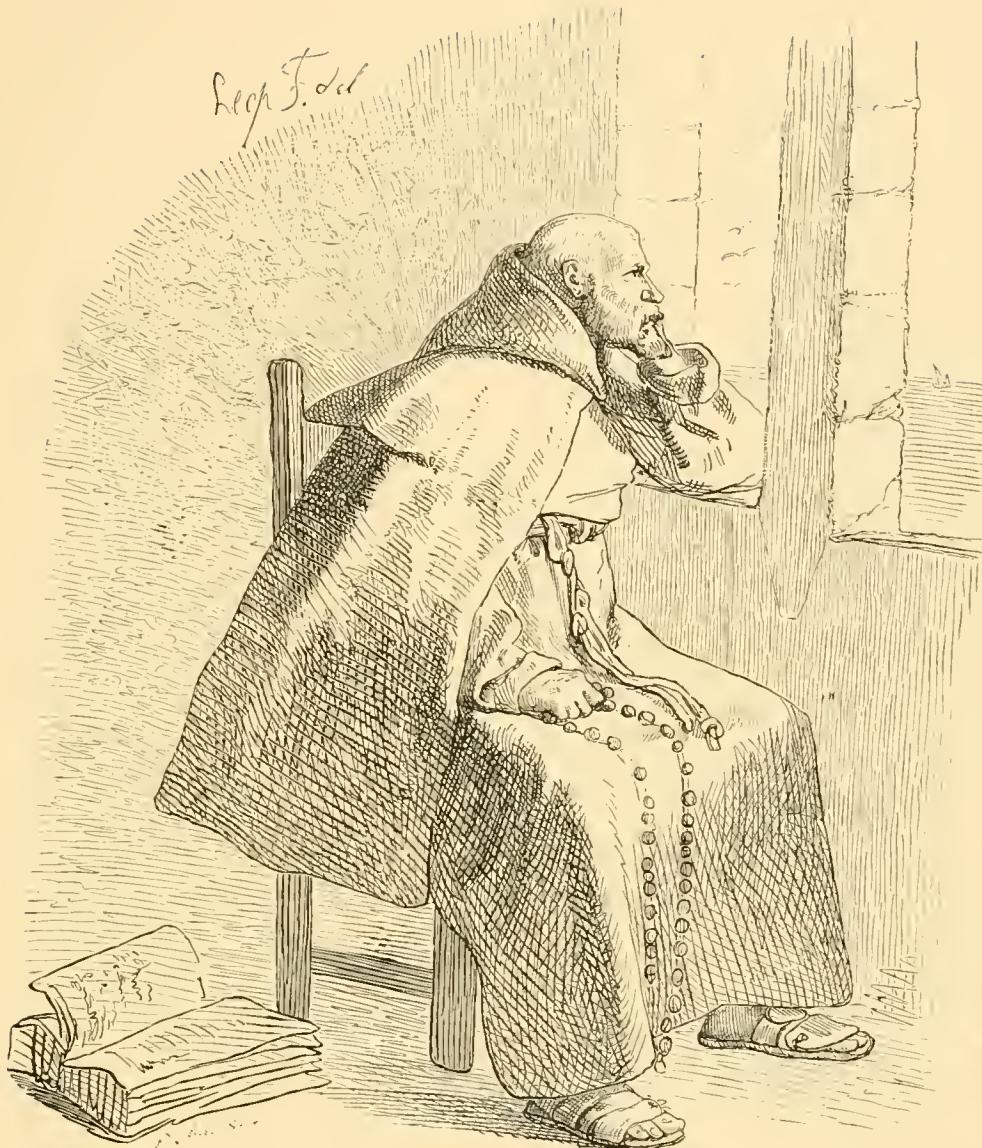
He even proposed to Columbus, at the last moment, in view of the bad weather, to send him to Spain by land with an escort suited to his rank. The Admiral knew that the King had been advised to have him assassinated, and had repelled the suggestion with horror. Nevertheless, he thought it more prudent to make the journey by sea; and on Friday, the fifteenth of March, he passed the bar of Saltes, sailed up the Odiel, landed at Palos, and rushed to meet the welcome of Father Juan Perez de Marchena.



THE MEETING WITH FATHER MARCHENA.



CHAPTER VII.



THE PRIEST AT HIS WINDOW.

CHAPTER VII.

It was not chance which brought the worthy Superior of La Rabida to meet his friend.

Seven months and a half had passed since the departure of the

little fleet, when, anticipating the time at which their return could reasonably have been looked for, the Father began to spend every hour which his duties left free at his station in the observatory. There, with his eyes fixed on the sea, he passed from prayer to calculation and reverie, while the beads of his rosary fell mechanically between his fingers.

His face was seldom seen in the city of Palos, where every look seemed to reproach him as the friend and patron of the Genoese adventurer, who had carried away on a hopeless quest the flower of their community.

So that, when he unexpectedly appeared at the head of the little lane leading down to the port, panting for breath, with all his tidings in his face, but unable to speak a word; before he could reach the quay, the cry was taken up from house to house, and in a moment, as if by magic, all the population of the place was around him.

It was as they had thought: the man who had been first to fathom the genius of Columbus had also been the first to recognize the *Nina* in the offing, and had hastened to bring to his anxious townsmen the welcome news.

Words are wanting to express the delirium of joy excited by his intelligence. Pomponius Lætus would have said that in the eyes of their fellow-citizens, the sailors of the *Nina* had returned from regions more remote than Hercules, who brought Theseus and Pirithous back from hell. The precious cargo, too, which they doubtless had on board enhanced the general joy.

Yet there was not wanting much anxiety and doubt. Of the three caravels which had left the port, only one, the smallest, was returning; and as she bore the Admiral's flag, what must have become of the two larger? If Father Marchena was sure of the safe return

of his friend, how many families were there who must meet with a bitter disappointment!

Then, too, as fortune no sooner grants us one favor than we demand another at her hands, some said that the return of the squadron would be nothing unless it had accomplished its purpose, and that such a speedy return argued only failure. Seven months and twelve days were evidently insufficient to conquer, convert and lay under contribution the land of gold and spices.

But this last point was soon to be cleared up.

Though the *Nina* was still in the offing, and was loaded to the water's edge, there was a certain triumphant flutter on her sails which seemed to presage great news. Old sailors say that a ship returning from a successful voyage can be as readily distinguished as a sportsman who has filled his game bag.

And the *Nina* was not silent. As she drew nearer, the thunder of her cannon, her signals of victory, the hurrahs of her crew were answered by the shouts of the townsmen, and the joyous peals of the tocsin.

From whence appear, in such an hour, flowers, vases, white cloths embroidered with bouquets, carpets, and images of saints, which in the twinkling of an eye make of a little village street a scene of enchantment, it would be hard to say; but they do appear.

Columbus landed, and walked to the church over a carpet of flowers, heath and oleander; under wreaths of foliage, rising from terrace to terrace. Some of the doors were hung with mottoes, one of which was in front of the barber's house.

But most touching of all to Columbus was the gratitude that shone in every face. He had done his best to bring back to the little town all the sons which, against his will, he had taken from her. He

had put on board the *Nina* all of them whom the little ship would hold. The few who remained had taken passage on the *Pinta*; and strange to say, while the *Te Deum* was being chanted in the church, and even in the street before it, for the church was too small on that day to hold the joyful throng, the *Pinta* too cast anchor in the port, and sailed up to the town, with one man only missing from her crew. That man was her commander, the faithless, and we may now call him, the unhappy Alonzo Pinzon, who, when he saw that the *Nina* had arrived before him, and that the Admiral's flag was floating from her mast, rowed to the shore, and fled to the seclusion of his own household. By this disgraceful flight he escaped for the moment from the just penalty of his treason.

As soon as he had touched land in the Bay of Biscay, Pinzon, who did not doubt that the little *Nina* had perished in the storm, wrote to the Two Kings a letter announcing his return, and taking to himself all the honor of Columbus' discoveries. The tremendous rebuke which he received from the Court, soon after witnessing the Admiral's triumphant return, threw him into utter despair. He died a few days afterwards in obscurity and disgrace.

Such was the lamentable end of a man of ability and unquestioned seamanship, whose share in the discovery of America would have assured him a brilliant future. He died a victim to the blindest and the most indomitable of passions. May the crimes into which he was led, at the close of a career hitherto irreproachable, have been sufficiently atoned by his anguish and disgrace!

We may imagine what a relief it was to Columbus to be spared from the infliction of the inevitable punishment. His joy at the *Pinta's* return was now as unmixed as that of the townsmen of Palos, who saw all their children restored to them.

The little town was grateful alike to the Admiral, who had so cared for her welfare, and to that Providence which had overruled all things for good; the day of the landing, the people accompanied Columbus and his sailors to church, where with one heart they rendered thanks to God; on the morrow, another religious duty was performed at the chapel of Santa Maria de la Rabida, where, barefooted and clad only in their shirts, like poor men saved from shipwreck, they went to fulfill a vow made on board. The Father Superior celebrated mass, a mass in which the full emotion of their hearts found expression on this great and solemn occasion.

After the communion and the mass, Juan Perez and Columbus left the crowd, and together ascended the steps of that little observatory which had seen so many conferences between them over the grandest of designs; and there took place, with the joyful effusion of friendship, an interview at which our readers may, if they please, be present.

They know the interlocutors, even without the help of our artist; they know the subject of the conversation, and can accompany every detail.

The scene is as easy to reproduce as the actors. A bare white-washed room, with great arched windows opening on a boundless sea; a few chairs, around a table loaded with globes, books and maps, to which Columbus has just added his own charts and his ship's journal, not yet abridged by Las Casas; and in the wall above the friends, a niche with a little statue of the Virgin, crowned with ever fresh flowers, and above her head the inscription, *Ave, maris stella!*

And now our readers can see and hear this simple, but noble and touching interview; an interview far more noteworthy than the triumphal reception of the crowd; for it is true that to understand a man one must be his equal, and Columbus found in that quiet con-

vent a heart and a genius equal to his own, and answering to his every thought; a friend and a brother such as he never met again, neither at court nor on seaboard, nor among the men of science; nowhere but under the roof of La Rabida, where the grandest of maritime designs ripened into fruition under the rays of the Star of the Sea!

Two days were given to his friends and hosts, the brothers of



COLUMBUS AND JUAN PEREZ.

St. Francis; and then Columbus began to devote himself to the numerous duties which the success of his enterprise brought with it.

He had already despatched to the Two Kings, by a private hand from Lisbon, a brief compendium of his discoveries; he now prepared a more detailed account; and forwarded it to the Court at Barcelona.

He hastened also to inform his wife and children, who had never quitted Cordova, of his return home, and he despatched to his beloved

father, who happily was still alive, a confidential message, with a letter relating the good news, and praying that his brother James (Giacomo), whose future he could now secure, might be sent to him.

The rise of Giacomo,—in Spanish Diego,—must have excited much jealousy in the city of Genoa, which had neglected and disowned his brother. The young man was twenty-six years old, and carried on the humble occupation of his father, with no outlook beyond it; and now of a sudden he was summoned to the Spanish court, and was transformed in a single day from Giacomo Columbus, the wool-carder, to the noble Don Diego Colon, aide-de-camp of the Grand Admiral of the Ocean Sea!

We shall soon see that he did not disgrace either this place of trust, or that of Administrator and Governor of Spanish India, which was bestowed on him some days afterwards, and which he was to fill with honor in the succeeding year.

The honor of a relationship with Columbus was now eagerly sought. All who bore the name, both in Italy and in the countries around, claimed to be descended from a common stock; so that, if the aged Dominic still had to bear a separation from his son, he had the consolation of seeing his family increase every day with a rapidity which seemed to ensure the perpetuation, if not the glory, of the name.

While these various messages were *en route* for their destination, Columbus addressed a faithful narrative of his discoveries to the Holy See. In this document, which he had drawn up in concert with Juan Perez, he submissively suggested the first draft of that division of the New World which was afterwards solemnly ratified by the famous bulls of the third and fourth of May, 1493.

At the same time, or at least at intervals, and seemingly to refresh himself from his heavy labor and responsibility, he fulfilled the various

pilgrimages, for which he had been four times chosen by lot during the continuance of the tempest.

When all these duties had been fulfilled, he departed first for Seville, where the formal answer of the Two Kings awaited him, and then for Barcelona, whither he had been summoned to attend them in person.

His journey, whose memory still survived a century later in the provinces of Valencia, of Murcia, of Castile and Aragon, was a series of triumphs which have been compared to those of Ancient Rome; an ambitious comparison, no doubt, from the material point of view, but a fair one as respects the enthusiasm which everywhere greeted the victor.

As he approached the city, moving slowly through the throng which pressed forward to catch a glimpse of his features and to greet him with applause, he saw coming towards him, on steeds that pranced at the sounds of trumpets and cymbals, a troop of cavaliers of the highest rank, who hailed him with acclamations, and whose outbursts of surprise and delight at the unique appearance of his retinue were as loud as those of children.

And in truth, had this retinue passed through the streets of one of our modern towns, severe, regular and monotonous as they are, and destitute of all color or picturesqueness, the cavalcade would, perhaps, be mistaken for the procession of an itinerant hippodrome.

And yet there were in that procession the elements, or rather the germs of one of the greatest revolutions in social economy ever wrought on the globe.

In front walked the pilots and the lower officers of the *Nina*, the highest in rank grasping the huge standard of the expedition. Then came the sailors, the ship boys and apprentices, carrying, tied to poles,



THE PROGRESS THROUGH BARCELONA.

THE DISCOVERERS WELL COME.



to oars and to pikes, the most curious specimens of the animal, vegetable and mineral productions of the New World; branches of different trees laden with their fruit, such for instance as the chocolate, whose nuts were soon to supply Europe, and especially Spain, with an ordinary article of diet; cocoanuts, quantities of bananas, enormous calabashes; a great variety of spices and of medicinal plants, the former of which was already known, but the latter new to Europe; sugar canes as big as the body of a child; tree-ferns; branches of the cotton plant, with the husks half open, showing a substance like little flakes of snow, which was destined to furnish clothing at a future day for the inhabitants of the world, and to embroil them with each other in bitter and ceaseless wars.

Among the vegetable products which had best resisted the long sea voyage, was a plant with tall stalk, crowned with great ears of grain, some purple as garnet, some transparent and yellow as amber, and topped by a light silky plume. This plant was the maize, or Indian corn, destined to become, in less than a single century, the principal food of the poorer classes in all Central Europe.

No doubt, too, there appeared among the vegetables the potato, hanging by its withered and blackened stalk; that modest plant, whose cultivation, introduced into France towards the year 1580, now extends over more than two millions of acres; the bread of the poor; the coarse manna which formed the staple of life in Ireland, and whose failure caused the starvation of thousands.

We cannot doubt, either, that tobacco figured as a curiosity among these products; but a century of civilization was still necessary before the triple function of this plant would be generally understood. The revenue now derived from tobacco is over a hundred millions of francs yearly. Let us not blame Columbus for a gift whose value

he did not understand; let us rather regret that instead of the privileges which so poorly paid his discovery, he did not ask for a monopoly of tobacco. Thus, supposing the very improbable occurrence that this monopoly had been left in the hands of his descendants, they could at this moment discharge their ancestor's pious vow, and buy the Holy Land from the Moslems.

But would Christendom allow the purchase?

The cavalcade of Columbus moved but slowly, and we shall have time to finish our description.

And first let us observe that, of all the productions of the New World which have just been enumerated, those most worthy of attention, as for instance the spices, produced the least effect on the spectators; they did not make nearly so much show as the famous iguana killed by the Admiral with his own hand. This monster, which in its life-time was so gentle and timid, excited the universal horror. The people wondered at the immensity of its size, and compared it with a smaller one of the same species, killed by Alonzo Pinzon, who seemed in all things to evince his inferiority to his chief.

Other animals, stuffed and living, struck the observer less by the variety of their color and form than by their essential difference from all the animals of Europe. Of this number was the agouti, the coati, the peccary; different sorts of reptiles and of saurians, smaller but more ferocious than the iguana, who greatly resembled the Egyptian crocodile, and thereby confirmed the idea that the Admiral had really discovered the eastern extremity of India.

These animals were generally of small size; but there were borne aloft the enormous shells of certain sea-turtles, full six feet in length. Perhaps the most conspicuous, alike to the eye and the ear of the crowd, were the red flamingoes, perched on their high thin stilts, and

seeking in vain for a rest for their huge beaks; the cockatoos with flesh-colored plumage and brimstone crest, always ready to stiffen with anger; the superb aras; and a hundred species of parroquets, flapping their wings on their airy perches, and answering the shouts of the throng by deafening shrieks and laughter, sometimes even by words of Spanish picked up on the voyage.

The products of Indian manufacture succeeded this itinerant menagerie. These were for the most part weapons of offence; clubs, bows and arrows, javelins, tomahawks skilfully cut from wood as hard and heavy as iron; various pieces of furniture, light but solid; instruments of music both pulsatile and wind, and among the latter, the double flute of the ancients, blown by the breath of the nostrils, so incomprehensible to us, but used in common by the contemporaries of Pericles and by the subjects of Anacoana.

While the weapons engrossed the attention of the men, the women were admiring lighter but bulkier trophies; shawls, of colors soft and blended like the rainbow; mantillas made of the feathers of birds; white and finely woven *naguas*, or long trailing dresses, closely plaited, but without sleeves or waists. How could savage women, they wondered, how could idolaters plan and fashion such beautiful garments?

And the necklaces, the diadems of humming-birds' feathers! And the beautiful worked baskets of straw whose colors were so exquisitely matched, and whose tissue was so close as to hold water without spilling a drop!

The Barcelona ladies might have been told that these latter objects were rare even in their native country. They were of the choicest manufacture, an offering from the Queen of Cibao to the Queen of Castile, from the Flower of Gold to the Flower of Grenada,

Wrought by the hands of women, they offered a noteworthy contrast to those hideous idols which now fill our museums, and drive out the graceful gods of Greece.

Some of these idols, doubtless, found favor with the throng; but we must add that these were made of gold, or at least plated with the precious metal. Among them were the huge masks of which we have made mention, and whose golden ears, nose and tongue excited the national cupidity.

Directly behind the gods came their adorers, six handsome Indians, whose skin was hardly visible under its tattooing and the rich ornaments with which they were covered. The large mournful eyes of these poor captives moved the pity of all. It was noticed that when the curious throng pressed too close, they turned instinctively towards a cavalier who rode just behind them.

The answering look of encouragement revealed, even more plainly than the universal respect and curiosity, the hero of the occasion, the Great Admiral, who without spilling a single drop of blood, had given to Spain a new world.

The common people hailed him as one of themselves, a man who had risen from humble station to an equality with the richest and proudest nobleman.

As to the women of every class, from the lively peasant girl standing on tiptoe to see the hero, to the fair dames leaning from their balconies, rustling with brocade of cloth of gold and velvet sewn with diamonds, there was not one who did not salute, with waving hand and kisses thrown through the air, the Chosen of God, the friend of Isabella, in the glory of whose discoveries their own sex had so great a share.

In the midst of demonstrations such as these Columbus reached

the palace. He was soon in the splendid hall where the royal pair awaited him, surrounded by the proudest dignitaries of the realm and of the church. As he entered, Isabella and Ferdinand rose from their thrones. Columbus bent his knee and strove to kiss their hands, according to the etiquette of the Court; but the Queen would not permit him; before his knee touched the ground, she pointed to a seat beside her, and bade him be covered, as befitted his rank; nor did she seat herself till her command had been obeyed.

For a while, overwhelmed by so gracious a reception, he was hardly able to speak; when he recovered himself, he began a detailed account of his expedition. The Two Kings listened with the most intense interest, both to his answers to their questions concerning the resources of the New World and the trophies which he had brought home, and to his glowing account of the great results to follow from his discovery for the glory of God and the happiness of mankind.

By one of these impassioned descriptions his long narration was concluded; and so great was the impression alike on the Sovereigns and their Court, that all fell on their knees together, and with tears of joy, intoned a *Te Deum*, which was soon repeated by the entire city.

This glorious scene, described by the good bishop of Chiapa, who was present near the Queen, as a foretaste of paradise; this *Te Deum*, sung by a kneeling people, was the swan's-song of Christian chivalry, of the era of Dante and Columbus. In a little while, neither the poet nor the discoverer would be recognized even by their own. Beatrix, the Christian Muse, was soon to open to the queenly Isabella the gates of light and peace; but Columbus was not to rejoin in Heaven the Singer of the Invisible World till, like Dante, he had traversed the circles of Purgatory and of Hell.

It is curious to notice how in this case, as often before, the methods of Art seem founded on the actual course of facts. If by happy chance there should ever be met together a poet, a language, a time and an audience worthy of composing and hearing the epic of Columbus, the plot of the poem would lie ready to hand in the events of his life.

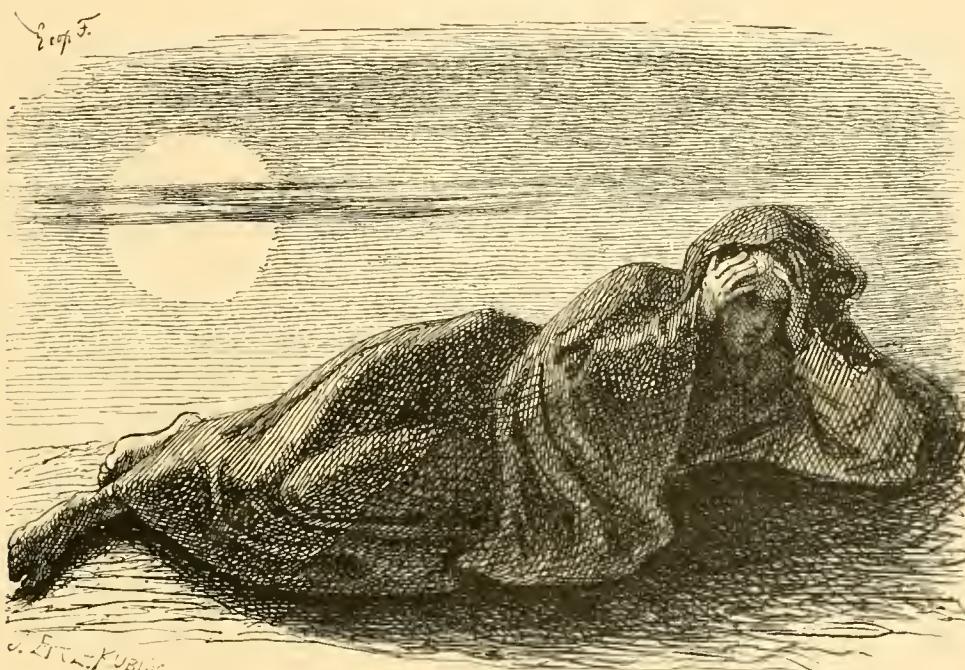
What grandeur and sequence in the plan! what order in the execution! what unity in the hero's character! what harmony in the *ensemble*, and what variety in the details! What art too, if the reader will pardon me the expression, in the arrangement of the contrasts!

We see these contrasts in the departure from Palos and the triumphal return to it; in the condemnation of the Admiral's plans by the Junta, and in their tremendous vindication by the result: and now the shield must be turned, and we must ask what reverses and what disgrace is to succeed this popularity. In accordance alike with the laws of poetry and of human nature, the fortune of Columbus has reached its climax, and must from this moment begin to fail.

For a few months yet, all will go well with him. Worshipped by Spain and by all Europe; his praises sung even in remote Africa: honored by an embassy from his native Genoa, whose senate had once turned a deaf ear to their illustrious citizen; consulted, counselled and blessed by the Holy See, which alone remained faithful to his side; he will show himself as modest in success as proud and resolute in adversity, and charm all men by the sweetness of his bearing.

Summoned constantly to the presence of the Queen, he will see her listening eagerly to his narrative, entering into his projects, forwarding his plans, and herself assuming the responsibility of their success.

Instead of the three caravels, with their unwilling crew, obtained with so much difficulty for his first expedition, he will have under his orders a fleet of seventeen ships, manned with seven hundred men, sailors and soldiers, colonists, gentlemen, artizans of all kinds; and he will be compelled to limit the number himself, for thousands will seek to follow his fortune.



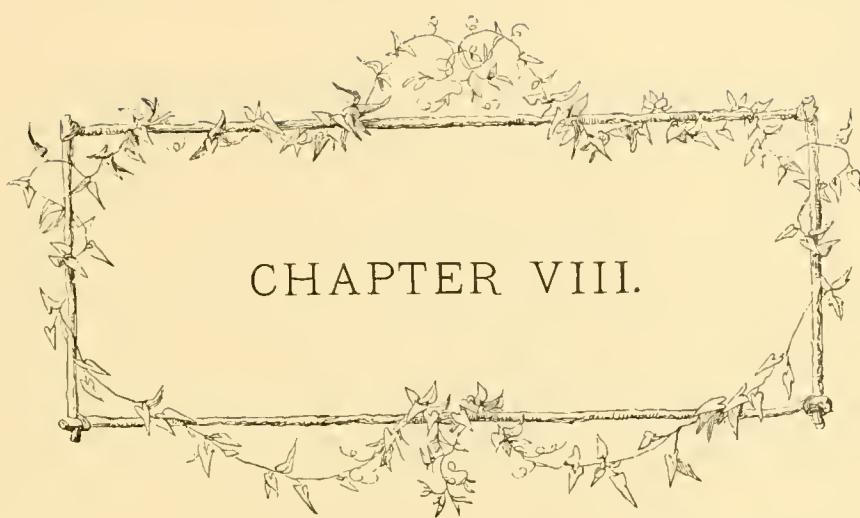
FAREWELL TO HAPPINESS.

At last, clothed with unlimited power, taking with him every instrument and appliance of colonization which his experience and the royal solicitude could conceive of; furnished with a personal retinue of thirty persons, among whom are ten esquires of noble blood, he will set sail from Cadiz.

What shall I add in conclusion of this happy chapter? His voyage will be swift and prosperous; he will land, as he has wished and sought, not at the harbor of St. Domingo, but on the shores where

dwell the cannibal Caribs, whom he tried to reach in his first expedition; and then * * * then will begin for him a series of mis-haps, of errors, of reverses and disasters, which I may not pass by, but on which I shall be pardoned for dwelling as lightly as may be. It is the last privilege of a merciful and Christian hero that, as time goes on, the brightness of his glory gradually obliterates the disgraceful remembrance of his persecutions and his sufferings.





CHAPTER VIII.



THE DEPARTURE FROM CADIZ.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON his first voyage of discovery, Columbus had bade set sail in the name of Jesus Christ; his second expedition was begun by invoking the special favor of the Virgin. One of the three carracks in

his squadron was named in her honor, and this he chose for his flagship, although it was not so good a sailor as either of the others.

On the twenty-fourth of October, he was still quite sick with an indisposition caused by the fatigue and anxiety attendant on the fitting out of the expedition. On that day there was a favorable change of wind; he rose in the middle of the night, sent orders through the fleet to weigh anchor, and himself directed the working of the ships. That no time should be lost, the fleet had already left the port, and were anchored out in the road-stead.

The spacious and beautiful Bay of Cadiz was then the theatre of a spectacle more imposing than had ever before been witnessed in her waters. The sombre green line of the fortifications, and the belt of white houses which stretched above it, the Cape of St. Sebastian, and the long expanse of the Isla, as far as the summits of the rocky islands called the Hog and the Diamond, were alive with spectators.

In the distance, the three carracks and seventeen caravels were vaguely outlined against the first faint light of the morning sky. The dark-blue sheet of water which lay between the city and the fleet was covered by thousands of vessels of every description, feluccas, fishing-boats, pleasure-boats, galleys, everything, in a word, which could be moved by oars or sails; not only from the harbor of Cadiz, but from Santa Maria, from Rota, and from all the Andalusian coast, from the mouth of the Guadalquivir to the Bay of Trafalgar.

Around each of the seventeen ships were tossing up and down a host of little boats, some of them filled with the friends and relations of those on board, others with citrons, oranges, pomegranates, watermelons, and fresh provisions of all sorts, which the sailors and passengers of the fleet were buying at the last moment.

In the midst of this confusion could have been seen, if any one

had really wished to detect them, human figures furtively clambering out of the boats and slipping by the port-holes into the hull of the caravels. These surreptitious passengers, among whom was more than one representative of a good family, had been inflamed with the universal thirst for gold. More than three hundred persons, the majority of them of no good reputation, and some noted desperadoes, succeeded thus in eluding the vigilance of the ships' officers. These men, at a later period, formed the nucleus of the opposition which baffled the wisest designs of the Admiral.

Soon, as a cannon shot gave the signal of departure, the group of boats around each vessel was cast loose. One only remained for a moment fast by the Marigalante, the Admiral's flag-ship. At length a youth and a child went down into it over the ship's side and were rowed to port. They were the sons of Columbus, who had received their father's last embraces and blessings.

Two hours later, the fleet was out of sight; and after ten days' voyage, it touched at Gomera, one of the Canary Islands.

After a short stay at these islands, where he took aboard seeds and domestic animals for the future colony, Columbus turned the fleet's head more to the south than during the first voyage, and on the third of November, after twenty-one days' sail, interrupted but once by a storm, his expectations were fulfilled by reaching the southernmost group of the Antilles.

As the day was a Sunday, the next after All-Saints, the first island discovered was christened Dominica, a name which it still bears. The Admiral took possession of it in the regular form; then, according to his custom, he erected a cross, which was formally blessed by one of the ecclesiastics on board.

This priest, whom a combination of circumstances pointed out for

the office, and who was later to have the honor of performing the first services of religion in the New World, was none other than our old friend Juan Perez de Marchena. Isabella had chosen him as her especial representative to accompany the expedition. As her delegate and in his individual capacity, he stood for two of the mystic triad to whom, under God, was due the discovery of the New World.

This combination between the man of genius, the Church and the Crown, in the conception and execution of the mighty work, has been made evident only in our own time. More than four centuries have been necessary to restore to Juan Perez his proper place in the narrative, of which he had been deprived through his own modesty, through the absence of documents, and through the prejudices of historians. The worthy monk's co-operation, and even his presence at the second expedition have been almost always passed over in silence by the historiographers of the last two centuries, and have even been contested, in the face of the most positive contemporary evidence; but they will no longer be disputed, thanks to M. Roselly de Lorgues, who has rendered this one service, at least, to religious and historical truth, and to the author of this narrative.

So that Juan Perez de Marchena was one of the first to see the new countries discovered by his friend. But while he admired the magnificence of nature, he was destined, unhappily, to recognize the blighting changes wrought by the avarice and sensuality of man, and to meditate with sadness on that harsh but inexorable law by which the gentle and the guileless are subjected to the rule of the strong and the intelligent.

Columbus was not ignorant of this law. He knew, moreover, that the ferocious Caribs, in spite of their cannibal propensities, were superior in intelligence to the tribes of the neighboring islands.

The first land which he discovered after Dominica and Mari-galante, at neither of which did he make any long stay, exactly justified his expectations.

This island, whose Carib name of *Taruqueira* he changed to Guadaloupe, was covered with forests of odoriferous trees, laden with fruit and flowers in profusion. From his first landing, he encountered signs of careful and intelligent cultivation of the soil. Numerous villages, from which the inhabitants fled at the approach of the Spaniards, bore still clearer witness to a relatively advanced civilization. The houses, carefully built of light materials suitable to the climate, were spacious, admirably arranged both for health and pleasure, and almost invariably adorned with galleries or with outer porticoes. In them were beautiful and comfortable hammocks woven of cotton thread, and various utensils and pieces of furniture fashioned with wonderful skill and patience. Among these were large and handsome earthen vases, several of which contained pieces of human flesh cooked and ready for eating.

Heads but freshly cut off, and limbs of men and of women were stored in these repositories, or hung in the kitchens, side by side with the hind-quarters of the dog or the iguana, with parrots, geese and ducks.

So that cannibalism was not in these regions a merely incidental fact, an outburst of animosity, of vengeance, or of superstition ; it was purely a sensual gratification, and was rendered doubly detestable, if there are any degrees in such a crime, by the abundance and the variety of vegetable and animal food enjoyed by those who practised it.

It may be imagined how deeply such a horrible spectacle would afflict Father Marchena, prepared as he had been by Columbus for the sight.

One thing alone puzzled the Admiral, as contrary to his expectations. He did not understand why these fierce and intrepid Caribs



A HORRIBLE DISCOVERY.

had allowed him to land without resistance, and had abandoned to him the most precious contents of their houses. Soon, however, from the entire absence both of boats and of weapons, he came to the

conclusion that, before his coming, they had gone off on some war-like expedition, leaving on the island only a scanty guard for the women and children.

This supposition was soon confirmed by women of another race, prisoners among the Caribs, who readily surrendered themselves to the Spaniards, as they had no other prospect than that of being devoured by their savage masters as soon as their beauty and strength should fail. Even those who had been made wives would fare no better than the others; they would be eaten whenever they ceased to please their husbands, and certainly before their flesh had grown tough with age.

The same custom prevailed as to the children born of these frightful unions, who owed their extraordinary plumpness to the same means by which we obtain the most delicate and the least prolific of our fowls.

Columbus received all these poor women under his protection. A few, adorned and equipped with all sorts of attractive articles, were sent to the Carib families who were known to be hidden in the woods. They soon returned, stripped of the gifts and horribly maltreated, and reported that no one would listen to them. On the first favorable occasion they were sent with the others to their native island.

Urged by the desire to meet with these Caribs, whose vigor would render them more useful allies, and even more fervent Christians, than the weak and pleasure-loving Ciguayans, the Admiral left Guadaloupe, in the hope to surprise the expedition which was then seeking its horrid prey among the natives of the neighboring islands.

On the way, he discovered and named the island of Montserrat, which had just been entirely depopulated by these same Caribs.

He also named Santa Maria la Redonda, and Santa Maria la Antigua, the latter of which is now abbreviated into Antigua.

Another island, which was probably St. Martin, was, like Guadalupe, fertile and well-cultivated, but abandoned by its inhabitants. A detachment of twenty-five men was sent on shore to explore the country, and was returning with a few prisoners, when its boat encountered a canoe containing six Indians, four men and two women. One of the latter, evidently of high birth, was seated by her youthful son.

Profiting by their stupefaction at sight of the ships, the boat came up close behind them and cut off their retreat. Then their inaction changed into fury, and reckless of the number of their enemies, and of the loud reports of the European musketry, they took deliberate aim at the Spaniards with their poisoned arrows.

In the twinkling of an eye, two men had been killed and several wounded by the hand of the chieftainess, when the Spaniards ran their boat against the canoe and upset it. But the Indians, half diving, half swimming, continued to shoot their arrows with fearful precision into the compact group of their enemies.

The final result of this skirmish is variously reported; but all agree that the young cacique, pierced through the body with a pike, died on shipboard, in spite of the care lavished on him, "with the courage of a Libyan lion."

The same eye-witness tells us of the heroic mother and the four warriors who had fought by her side, that "they were so fearful that none could look them in the face, but his heart and his entrails trembled with fear; so hideous and infernal was their aspect."

This time, for a certainty, Columbus had met true Caribs.

His experience of them, for the present, had to be limited to this

encounter. Time pressed, and it was necessary for him to reach St. Domingo. He arrived there a few days afterwards, having reconnoitred on his way the islands of Santa Cruz, Santa Ursula, San Juan Battista, and the countless group of islets which he named the Archipelago of the Eleven Thousand Virgins.

To the great surprise of his sailors, who saw him directing his course in these strange latitudes as if every reef was familiar to him, the Admiral cast anchor on the twenty-second of November, as he had announced, in that very gulf of Samana, where, eleven months before, he had left a Spanish garrison.

A pinnace was sent at once to reconnoitre the mouth of the Golden River. The first sight which met the crew was a floating body, nailed to two pieces of wood joined in the shape of a cross. The corpse was too far gone to allow its race to be distinguished; but a second and a third were encountered, and at last one whose beard, still adhering to the flesh, left no more doubt of the mournful truth.

All of them were Europeans, whom the current of the river was bringing down to meet their brethren.

This dreadful spectacle left little doubt of the fate of the garrison; and the Admiral soon learned that it had been burned in the fort, or massacred to the last man by a Carib chief, the cacique of the House of Gold, the formidable Caonabo.

Whether Anacoana had lost her control over her savage lord, or whether the crimes committed by the Spaniards had induced her to abandon them to the just vengeance of her people, it was difficult to decide from the information of the faithful Guacanagari. As soon as he found that Columbus had landed, this cacique came in haste to see his old friend. He declared that he had done everything in

his power to prevent the catastrophe, even to making war with his ally Caonabo. He even declared that he had received a grievous wound in defence of the Spaniards; but this was soon discovered to be false, and caused many to believe that he had played the traitor. This the Admiral always refused to believe; and the result confirmed him in his politic confidence.

But those around him were not of the same mind; he had to overrule, on this occasion, much insensate and violent counsel, and to endure many imputations suggested by the extermination of the infant colony. The truth is, however, that he had left the colonists instructions of admirable wisdom, which are still extant, and one of which alone, the most peremptory of all, that of never sleeping outside the fort, would have rendered impossible the catastrophe for which the Admiral was now blamed by a Boyle and a Fonseca. In truth, he had hardly left the island when his delegate, Diego de Arana, saw his authority contemned in all important matters; the garrison treated the Indians with barbarity; most of them left the fort to live outside in huts, with the wives of the Indian chiefs for their companions. The commander could hardly keep a dozen of these foolish men in the fort at night, and even these refused to do sentinel duty.

But for this discord and recklessness, revealed to Caonabo by an outraged people, that chief would never have dared to attempt the massacre; the whole responsibility for the result must fall upon the victims.

However this may be, all hope of a peaceful victory was now gone; and the resistance of the Indians had found an occasion and a leader, whom it would be necessary for the Admiral to chastise at the first opportunity.

His most pressing necessity for the time being was to establish a local centre of defence, and if necessary of attack, for the European colony. With this object in view he had from the day of his arrival instituted a committee of investigation, who soon decided upon a location. It was the most favorable that could have been conceived of. Water, stone, carpenter's-woods were all in the neighborhood; and, thanks to the help of the Indians, who came in numbers on learning of the Admiral's presence, a little city soon rose among the trees. This town, which was destined at a future day to become the Spanish capital of St. Domingo, was baptized, on the sixth of January, the anniversary of the fall of Grenada, by the name of Isabella.

Two months had sufficed to erect this city with its works of defence. During the same space of time, some of the grain brought from the Old World had already brought forth fruit in this wonderful soil, and proved an invaluable resource to the little colony, which had been threatened by famine on account of the insufficient supplies from Europe.

Columbus, who, as the reader will remember, was sick when the fleet sailed from Cadiz, had been shamefully cheated in the quantity and quality of all the provisions, medicines, beasts of burden and articles of barter put on board the ships. This was his first experience of a long course of knavery and chicanery on the part of the naval contractors, whose villainy will excite the special indignation of those who appreciate the obstacles thus cast in the way of the Admiral.

The discovery and report of their frauds added these influential persons to the list of the enemies of Columbus.

The most dangerous of these enemies, on account of their birth and of some remaining influence and favor at Court, were the vagabond hidalgos, of whom a word has already been said. They

had come in the train of Columbus, hoping for ease, pleasure and the rapid acquisition of wealth; and they blamed the Admiral for the deception of their hopes.

Contrary to reason and the ordinary course of things, these malcontents found a strong ally in Father Boyle, the Apostolic Vicar of the expedition, who owed his appointment to this important post to a sheer mistake of name. He was a man of integrity and of good morals; but his conduct was at once childish and vindictive. He had never pardoned Columbus for refusing to follow his advice and to put Guacanagari to death, and his resentment induced him to espouse the side of these worthless nobles, who complained bitterly of the disregard shown to their birth in the equal allotment of work and of rations among the colonists.

Father Boyle, who, both as a Christian and a man of the world, should have known that this measure was absolutely indispensable, now urged Columbus to repeal his enactment; and upon his refusal, excommunicated him.

The Admiral and Viceroy of the Indies replied to this worthless anathema, which by the way was never ratified at Rome, by striking one-fourth from the already reduced rations of Father Boyle's protégés.

Hereupon the greater excommunication, as it is technically called, was hurled at him by the indignant priest.

This resulted in an order from Columbus to issue no rations whatever; and Father Boyle, who was now on dry bread and water, like a disobedient schoolboy, raised the excommunication; whereupon the Admiral issued to the malcontents the regular half ration, which they now were glad enough to receive.

Unhappily, this scandalous comedy, in which the only worthy part had been played by the Admiral, stirred up in the fleet a party hostile

to his policy and to his person; so that, when he sent back to Spain twelve of his ships, he knew that his despatches to the Two Kings would be accompanied by calumnious attacks from his enemies.

Just at this time he was obliged, with the help of his brother Diego, who won his spurs on the occasion, to crush, by the sternest measures, an outbreak headed by the hidalgos and countenanced by the unworthy representative of the spiritual authority.

He took no other vengeance on Father Boyle than to appoint him a member of the Council, of which Diego was President, charged, during the Viceroy's absence, with the government of the colony.

But Father Boyle was not a man to be disarmed by his adversary's generosity. When the Admiral left Isabella, with the double design of proceeding in his voyage of discovery and of bringing the Caribs to subjection, he left behind him enemies far more formidable than any whom he was seeking.

He had already, through a preliminary exploration, fixed the military and scientific landmarks of this second and final expedition. The political and geological constitution of the island was not unknown to him. He knew pretty nearly the course of the rivers reported to be gold-bearing, and the location of the so-called deposits; he was aware that the island was divided into the governments of five principal caciques, each supported by a number of lesser chiefs.

Of these five little kings the noblest was Guarionex; the most warlike was Caonabo, a Carib of obscure birth, who owed his elevation to his bravery and to the love of Anacoana.

To the former of these chiefs belonged the great fertile plain which still bears the name bestowed upon it by Columbus of Vega Real. In this territory they had, by permission of the cacique, founded the new city of Isabella.

Caonabo reigned over the southernmost and most mountainous part of the island.

Between the habitual residence of this chief and the Spanish city Columbus had erected a fort, whose command he left to a certain Pedro Margarite, a man who owed everything to the Admiral, and who was even then conspiring against him. Seeing that Margarite was exposed to an attack which did not, however, threaten to prove very formidable, and supposing that a reënforcement of seventy men would suffice for an officer of his well-known ability, Columbus sent him a company of picked men: after which, postponing to a better occasion the conduct of a war of invasion in which he himself would take the lead, he set sail with three caravels, manned with a trustworthy crew, most of whom were from Palos. He was accompanied by Juan Perez, by the famous cosmographer Juan de la Cosa, and, among other distinguished and zealous men, by Dr. Chanca, the author of a journal from which we have already quoted.

The most remarkable results of this voyage, whose detail would lead us into too much repetition, were the discovery of the island of Jamaica, and the exploration of almost all the southern coast of Cuba, which confirmed Columbus and his scientific companions in the erroneous idea that this island was the eastern extremity of Asia.

In Jamaica he found, not exactly the Caribs, but an intelligent, handsome, industrious and energetic race, whom, after more than one severe engagement, he subdued to a friendship with the invaders.

The person who most contributed to bring about this ephemeral truce was an old man, apparently of eighty years of age, whose conversation so impressed the Admiral by its morality and benevolence that a lively sympathy was soon established between them, and the Indian declared his determination to follow Columbus, "to the morn-

ing land, to the skies." It needed all the prayers of his wife and the tears of his children to dissuade him from his resolution.

This meeting on the seashore, in the midst of the New World's virginal splendors; this lovely idyl, inserted as it were to mark the dividing point between the happiness and the unhappiness of his life, must have left on the mind of Columbus an indelible impression of beauty and of pleasure.

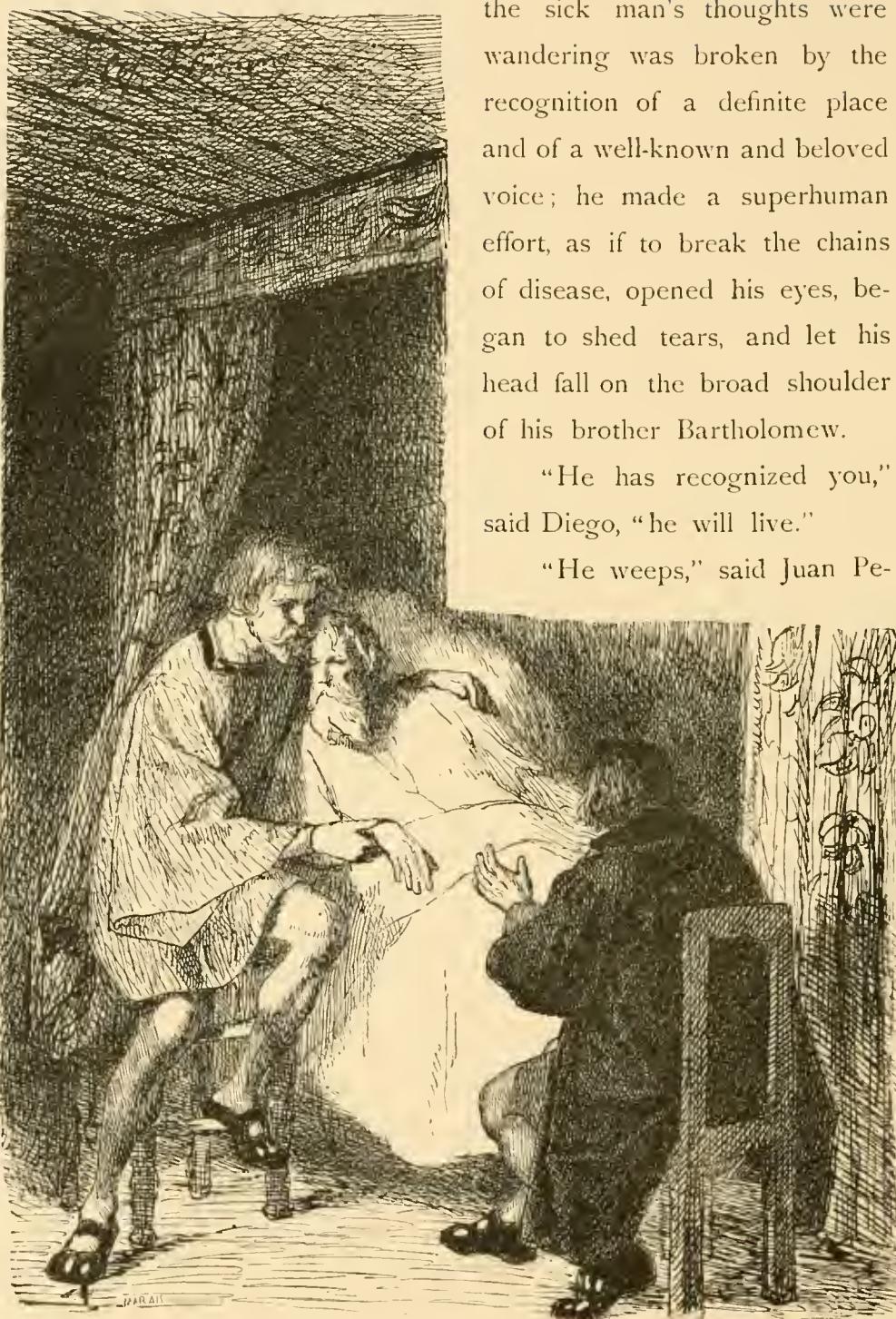
He was surrounded as well by scenes of natural beauty, to whose charms his heart was especially open.

Sometimes in the distance the sky would be brightened by hosts of radiant butterflies or darkened by legions of sea-birds; sometimes the brilliant light color of the water would be suddenly darkened by myriads of turtles, making their periodic migration towards the hot sand of the seashore, in which to deposit their eggs. Such was the impetus of these moving masses that the motion of the ship was often perceptibly retarded by them.

More serious obstacles delayed his return to St. Domingo, and when he had added to his discoveries the easternmost cape of the island, after having struggled for nearly a month against constant bad weather; when he was ready to attack the Caribs in their native lairs, he fell suddenly prostrate to the deck.

The strange sickness which paralyzed at the same time his body and his mind seemed to be a sort of catalepsy, which Dr. Chanca attributes to his constant watches and loss of sleep. He adds that the Admiral's companions resolved upon bringing him back, "as one half-dead, to the city of Isabella."

But this utter prostration of a mind which had been driven too hard by the indefatigable will was not to prove of indefinite duration. It lasted, however, for five long nights and days, until the limbo in which



the sick man's thoughts were wandering was broken by the recognition of a definite place and of a well-known and beloved voice; he made a superhuman effort, as if to break the chains of disease, opened his eyes, began to shed tears, and let his head fall on the broad shoulder of his brother Bartholomew.

"He has recognized you," said Diego, "he will live."

"He weeps," said Juan Pe-

THE SICK BED.

rez, "he is saved." And not only was he saved, but his ability to meet the difficulties which had gone far towards breaking down his strength was doubled by the presence of his energetic, intelligent and devoted brother.

Bartholomew was in France, making interest for Columbus at the Court, when, upon the tidings of the discovery of the New World, King Charles VIII. made him a magnificent present and sent him to rejoin his brother in Spain. But in spite of all his haste, he arrived too late for the second expedition.

The Queen had then put him in a condition to rejoin his brother, and he brought back from the Court the moving details of his own gracious welcome, and the assurance that the Admiral had lost not a whit of the royal favor.

This intelligence was soon confirmed by the arrival of four caravels, bringing to the colony all that the Viceroy had asked; and, at the same time, a letter and presents from Isabella, in which she displayed both her forethought and her magnificent generosity.

But the discordant elements which, before his departure, he had successfully appeased, had so fermented during his absence that he was compelled to give up his expedition against the Indians.

The revolt of this people had become almost universal, owing to the divisions among the Spaniards and to their oppressive conduct, and especially to that Pedro Margarite of whom we have made mention. This officer openly rebelled against Diego Columbus, and Father Boyle made common cause with him. They finally deserted their posts in the most dishonorable manner, and set sail for Spain, taking with them a number of malcontents.

As the disbanded soldiers of Margarite were living by rapine and exaction, the Indians had combined to destroy them. The only chief

who refused to unite in the league, and thereby justified the confidence of Columbus, was the cacique Guacanagari. The soul of the conspiracy was Caonabo.

Having been baffled in several assaults, especially in one upon the fort, into which the faithful Ojeda had thrown himself after Margarite's defection, the Lord of the House of Gold had instructed his allies to starve out the Spaniards, by ceasing to cultivate the soil and by destroying the harvests and the seed-corn.

Guacanagari gave the Admiral notice of this project; and it became evident that Caonabo must be seized upon. This feat was accomplished by Ojeda, who brought the chief into Isabella bound hand and foot, thanks to a stratagem which might pass, in those rough times, for a legitimate device against a treacherous savage.

The news of his capture roused the whole island against the Spaniards; but Bartholomew Columbus, with one hundred foot and twenty horse, commanded by the valiant Ojeda, dispersed the host of the enemy.

Soon after this, Columbus built three fortresses, commanding the most important positions of the Vega Real; and the country now being momentarily pacified, he again began to search for the gold which was so pressingly and constantly demanded by the mother country.

Meanwhile, Diego Columbus went to Spain, to answer in person, before the Two Kings, the accusations brought against his brother. His enemies at Court were too strong; and he had the mortification of bringing back with him a delegate of the crown, charged to make inquiry into the conduct of the Viceroy.

His enemies had counted upon his well-known quickness of temper to extort from him, under such trying circumstances, acts or words

of revolt; but, to the confusion of the delegate himself, Columbus, though he knew the man to be his enemy, received him with demonstrations of respect.

When, however, he saw that no justice was to be expected from him, the Admiral determined to accompany him back to Spain, to make a personal defence and explanation of his conduct.



THE DEATH OF CAONABO.

He set sail, therefore, on the faithful *Nina*, taking with him the sick, the discouraged, and thirty Indians.

Among the latter was the cacique Caonabo, and an Indian woman of high rank, who had left her friends and her country to share his fate. The Lord of the House of Gold did not belie the pride of his race and of his character. In vain was the solemn engagement of Columbus to restore him to freedom and to his subjects when once he had presented him to the Two Kings; incapable

of supporting the humiliation which he had undergone, he quickly pined away. One of his brothers, who also was among the captives, survived him but a few days.

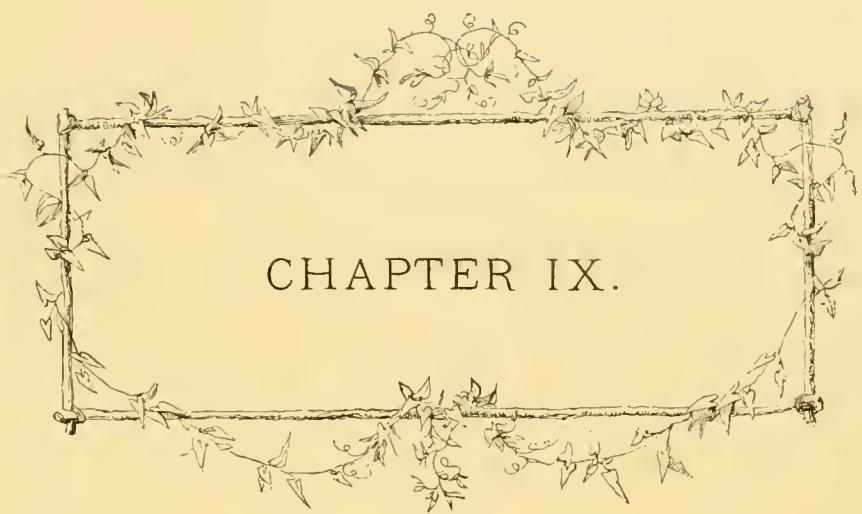
By this time the *Nina* and the second caravel, on which was the accuser Aguado, had been roughly handled and much delayed in their voyage by the adverse trade winds, and by continual storms. A scarcity of provisions ensued, which soon amounted almost to a famine. At length there came a time when the crew rose in revolt, and demanded that the Indians should be delivered to them, that they might use the *lex talionis* against the Cannibals; but the Admiral threw himself in front of them, and defended them with his own person; and not one had perished when, by the grace of God, on the eleventh of June, 1496, the two caravels cast anchor in the roadstead of Cadiz.





COLUMBIA PROTECTING HIS COUNTRYMEN

BY SAM'L M'NELL SCULP



CHAPTER IX.



THE CHAIN OF GOLD.

CHAPTER IX.

If aught can add to the disdain inspired in every generous mind by Popularity, that counterfeit of Glory, it will be by the story of Columbus' return to the same port from which, twenty-nine months before, he had set out under the full breeze of public favor.

It is enough to say, for the purposes of this story, that the contrast was one for a hero to forget; and that there is not a word in the writings of the Admiral to show that in the presence of this trial, he was ever for a moment less than himself.

The silence of the Two Kings, after he had notified them of his return, much oppressed him; for he had to appear before them and plead not for glory, but for the work of his life and for his honor. This silence he had to endure for more than a month, which he spent at the monastery of La Rabida, with his friend Juan Perez. The worthy Superior had returned with Columbus; but we know nothing of him henceforward, except that he died a short time before his friend.

When at last the royal letter arrived summoning Columbus to Burgos, where the Court was then held, the Admiral and Viceroy of the West Indies had resumed his ancient habit of a Franciscan monk, endeared to him of old. This he wore during his easy journey to Burgos; surprising by his simplicity a populace on whom all pomp and formality would have been thrown away. Yet there was in his train an Indian carrying a gold chain whose value by weight was about sixteen thousand francs, or over three thousand dollars; a considerable sum for that time.

The Admiral had, in truth, just before his departure to Spain, been visited with a gleam of good fortune, the last with which his career was illumined. He had discovered a rich gold mine in St. Domingo, and could bring with him some proof that his glowing accounts of the mineral wealth of the New World were not mere exaggeration.

This discovery, however, did not produce all the effect for which he had hoped. The unfavorable accounts given by the deserters had broken the charm of his success.

As an Italian, he had failed to reckon with the proud indolence of the Spanish character. Year after year, this people make oil of an inferior quality, when they might have the best in the world if, instead of gathering the half-rotten olives which have fallen from the tree, they would pluck them at the proper season. These indolent hidalgos had now learned that however abundant gold might be in the New World, some trouble was necessary to obtain it. From the time when this news was brought to them, the western world and its discoverer lost all their *prestige*.

But the Admiral was not discouraged; for, in his heart, he had counted only upon Isabella. Cold as was the missive which summoned him to Burgos, prepossessed against him as he expected to find the Two Kings, he presented himself before them with an easy and confident bearing, before which the false fabric of accusation heaped up against him rapidly fell to pieces.

Instead of the somewhat random defence which he had prepared, he was asked only for an account of his second expedition, and his tale was interrupted only by the lively and intelligent questions of Isabella.

King Ferdinand, of a drier and colder nature, made inquiries of him only as to one point, which Columbus had designedly passed over. His precaution aroused the hopes of his powerful enemies, who believed that on the question of gold, he would have little to say that was satisfactory.

Columbus, in fact, made no answer in words; he motioned to the Indian who bore the heavy chain of gold to come forward.

The effect was dramatic, and the result upon the prince and his court instantaneous.

Nor did the Admiral stop at this point; while the Queen and

her ladies examined, at his request, his freight of rare birds, exquisite uncut gems, pieces of amber, and the shells of pearl-bearing oysters, he displayed to the King huge masses of ore from the gold mine so opportunely discovered by him on the southern shore of St. Domingo.

At this spectacle, and at the sharp glance cast by the monarch upon the enemies of Columbus, the Boyles and the Fonsecas saw that their time had not yet come.

Columbus used his advantage with the greatest modesty; he made no attempt to regain his lost popularity, whose inconstancy had robbed it of all value in his eyes. He was touched, however, by the marks of favor bestowed on him by the Queen, and by the private audiences to which she condescended to summon him, in company with the faithful Duchess of Moya, and with the illustrious Juana de la Torre, the nurse of the Infant, who became his intimate friend. In this august society, he consoled himself for the delays incident to the fitting out of a new expedition.

We must add that Isabella, as a signal mark of her favor, had attached the two sons of Columbus to her person as pages, so that he might never approach her without seeing his children. But the sentiment which prompted this tender mother to so delicate an attention was also to be the cause of a delay which came near proving fatal to the hopes of the Admiral.

The marriage of the Princess Margaret, her daughter, to the King of Portugal, ardently as she had desired it, had been the cause of an afflicting separation, and of a preoccupation which the Admiral could not overcome. Thus months were lost, and a gradual change came over the temper of the King, caused partly by the following occurrence.

The commander of three ships just arrived from the colony

boasted that he had a cargo of *bars of gold*. This expression, construed literally, determined Ferdinand to make use of the fund destined by the Queen for the Admiral's third expedition; and after he had done so, it was discovered that the vessel's cargo consisted only of a number of Indians, brought over to be sold as slaves, and whose price was the gold of which the imaginative captain had written.

We may imagine to what use the enemies of Columbus would put this provoking disappointment. Philanthropy was invoked against him, and although her name was far less powerful then than now, it was strong enough to increase the Admiral's difficulties.

Those very hidalgos who had treated the natives of Cuba and St. Domingo with the most frightful cruelties; others who had negro or Moorish slaves in Castile; and others who had burned Jews to death over a slow fire, crossed themselves with horror at the bare thought of reducing to slavery or setting to work at the mines the innocent Caribs, poor cannibal Indians!

And at the same time they grumbled incessantly against the new colony for not sending gold enough to the coffers of the metropolis.

One would think it would have been easy to find substitutes for these unfortunate Indians at the mines; but the New World, the Land of Gold, had fallen into such discredit, that Columbus could find no workmen but murderers, robbers and convicts under sentence for life; and even these had to be tempted, in addition to their liberty, by the promise of all sorts of gratuities, and of a speedy return to Europe.

The prospect of having these men to reduce to discipline was less discouraging to Columbus than the chicanery of the Council for the Indies, under the lead of Bishop Fonseca, the Administrator-General. There was a time at which his patience seemed so to be giv-

ing way under an accumulation of indignation and disgust, that the Queen, in order to conciliate him, offered to constitute a large principality in St. Domingo for him and his children forever; but Columbus declined this magnificent offer, fearing that it had been suggested by his rivals to destroy or to cripple his activity; and roused by this idea, he took personal supervision of the smallest purchase made on account of the expedition.

Thus did he prove that his will, so long accustomed to subdue the restive pride of others, could apply itself to the smallest as well as the greatest obstacles.

For a moment, after a year of intermittent assistance from Isabella, his efforts seemed about to be crowned with success, when the unexpected death of the Infant, Don Juan, the beloved son of the Queen, cast her into a grief upon which no matters of business could be suffered to intrude.

It was eight months after this unhappy event, when, under gloomy auspices, of which some idea may be formed by the above details, he weighed anchor in the harbor of San Lucar de Barrameda.

To the last moment, he feared to see his expedition countermanded, or at least delayed. Insulted and reviled by the common people, and threatened on board of his own ship by a Jewish agent of the Navy Bureau, he struck him to the deck and tossed him overboard.

The wretch was largely rewarded by the chiefs of his faction, and was represented as a victim to the tyranny of Columbus. But the Admiral's unpopularity both in the bureaux and in the synagogues could hardly be increased; and the worthless wretches who composed so large a portion of his crew were taught that their leader was not a man to trifle with.

On the evening of the same day, Columbus thus began his journal for the Two Kings:

"On Wednesday, May the thirtieth, (1498), I set sail, in the name of the Holy Trinity, from the city of San Lucar, still suffering from the effects of fatigue incurred in my former voyages. On my previous return from the Indies, I had hoped to taste a little repose in Spain; but I found there only disappointment and pain."

He who wrote these lines took with him from his adopted country not only the knowledge that he was misunderstood, but the additional burden of physical suffering. Yet he did not hesitate to choose a path over the ocean more hazardous than any he had yet traversed.

By the time he had reached, almost on the equatorial line, the island of Trinidad and the immense delta formed by the mouths of the Orinoco, thus achieving the great discovery of a new continent, he had suffered all that hunger and thirst, sickness and the fury of the elements can inflict upon mortality.

But these trials did not overcome his energy. Some of them were as new to him as to his companions; but the sufferings of the crew caused him to pass lightly over their infractions of discipline. Tormented by fever and by gout, half robbed of sight by ophthalmia, he dictated the following lines: "At an advanced hour of the night, seated upon the poop, I heard as it were a fearful roaring; and as I sought to penetrate the darkness, I saw of a sudden to the south a mountain of water as high as the ship, rolling slowly towards us. Above it, with frightful din, rolled a foaming billow in which I made sure we would be engulfed. I shuddered to this moment in remembering it. Happily, the billow and the mountainous surge passed beyond us, in the direction of the entrance to the channel, in which they whirled about for some moments and gradually diminished in volume."

Yet Columbus, a few hours after this enormous mass of water had thus been engulfed in the channel, did not hesitate to explore it, and to give to its eastern entrance the name of the Dragon's Mouth.



THE TIDAL WAVE.

The explanation of the phenomenon he had beheld, as caused by the sudden swelling of one of the large rivers which empty into the

Gulf of Paria, was not yet known to him. But the taste of the water and numerous other indications soon revealed to him the existence of a continent of which, unfortunately, he could make no fitting exploration.

He did not depart, however, without having accumulated a number of valuable observations. Among other things, he discovered the existence of the equatorial current. We should be glad to believe that he noticed the elevation of the globe in the equatorial zone; but the language which he employs on this subject is so vague that we cannot fully subscribe to the opinion of M. Roselly de Lorgues.

But that conscientious author seems to us nearer the truth when he adds that Columbus believed in the existence of a great sea stretching to the south of the new continent. He believed, however, at the same time, that this continent was the prolongation of Asia. We have seen what a combination of circumstances, what a curious agreement of nomenclature had confirmed him in his opinion, which the appearance of the natives rendered still more plausible.

The features of these men recalled the Hindoo, and even the Caucasian type, far more than those of the Lucayans or the Caribs. They wore turbans of a stuff as soft and brilliant as silk; their gentle manners and their commodious habitations completed the delusion. Finally, an abundance of pearls, hitherto obtained only from Asia, was found on their coasts. Columbus even gave the name of the Bay of Pearls to a body of water, which, by the way, never justified his appellation. But throughout that fertile country, on the mainland as well as in Tabago, Grenada, Margarita and other newly discovered islands, men, women and children wore pearls set in necklaces and bracelets. At Cubagua, where he saw the Indians fishing for pearls, he bought more than three pounds' weight.

From this island he was compelled with great regret to set sail, on the eighteenth of August, for St. Domingo, in sight of whose shores he arrived after a pleasant voyage.

He anchored in a creek by the little island of Beata, and had just sent a private message to his brothers Diego and Bartholomew, when the latter arrived by sea, in the greatest haste. The Admiral augured no good from such a proceeding; but his worst apprehensions were surpassed by the Adelantado's news.

He had suspected that his brother, to whom, during his absence, he had delegated his authority, would have difficulty with the more turbulent portion of the colony.

But he knew also his brother's aptitude for warfare and for administration; an aptitude which the enemies of Bartholomew soon learned by his wise and vigorous measures. Hopeless of succeeding by mild means, he adopted sterner counsels; the velvet glove of the Admiral was transformed to a steel gauntlet.

This course would perhaps have succeeded in the long run, if he had had to deal with men like himself in mind and heart, as were some of the Europeans. He knew how favorable had been his brother's welcome at Court; and he hoped to detach from the faction hostile to the Admiral the perfidious but politic Roldan. As to the accomplices or rivals of this dangerous man, he had already taught them some severe lessons, when a new element of disorder came in to complicate the situation.

Before his last departure from St Domingo, Columbus had left all the Indian population of the island in a state of willing or unwilling submission; with the exception only of the tribes who had remained neutral, over whom reigned the noble and powerful cacique Behechio, the brother-in-law of Caonabo. The capture of the latter

BARTHELEMY
COLOMB



BARTHOLOMEW COLUMBUS

caused a general commotion through this island, and a partial uprising against the Spaniards, which Bartholomew, thanks to the persistent neutrality of Behechio, easily put down. A year had passed without any change in the Indian chief's attitude, which was neither warlike nor friendly.

This independent position was fraught with danger to the Spanish authority. At any minute, the chief of the warlike tribes of Xaragua could offer either of the opposing factions in the colony the means of obtaining the mastery. In fact, it was believed at Isabella that Roldan was in secret negotiation with him with this design, and that an all-powerful influence had been brought to bear on the mind of the cacique to induce him to consent.

At this news, Bartholomew's first idea was to stamp out this incendiary spark. His second thought was to pay a visit to the beautiful and puissant Anacoana. This visit he had neglected for more than a year; an omission which might have led to serious consequences.

Bartholomew was unquestionably a great man. He was, perhaps, inferior to his brother only in the happy faculty of taking the initiative, and in that feminine element which acts as a leaven to genius, and mingles grace with strength.

Neither on his arrival at St. Domingo, nor up to this time, had he shown a comprehension of the womanly nature of Anacoana, and the importance of propitiating her. Whatever advice his brother may have given him on this subject, the capture and death of Caonabo had seemed to him to open a gulf between the widow of the monarch and all Europeans; and this gulf, with his moderate estimate of Anacoana's power, he had never attempted to bridge.

Fortunately, he recognized his mistake before it was too late;

and, politic even in his gallantry, he set off with a large and well-armed body of troops, so as to give to his visit that warlike pomp so impressive to women even of countries more civilized than was Xaragua.

Anacoana was exceedingly pleased by this homage. This extraordinary woman, who had understood and sympathized with Columbus, but whom the capture of Caonabo had long alienated from him, had not the same motives for keeping aloof from Bartholomew. The welfare of her tribe, exposed to the destructive assaults of the Caribs, was an inducement to her to reëstablish through the Adelantado her friendly relations with the Admiral. She had gone to spend the years of widowhood with her brother Behechio, according to the etiquette of her race and station; but we may suppose that she had by this time found consolation for the loss of a Carib husband who had compelled her to make war upon the Spaniards.

At a later time, her clear intelligence had enabled her to forecast, in all the divisions among the Europeans, the ultimate triumph of the rightful authority; and the slight encouragement she had given the rebels was a gentle hint to Bartholomew that he was neglecting her.

The same feminine adroitness caused her at the first to remain passive, when her brother, who misinterpreted the object of the Spanish military display, brought together forty thousand warriors to meet Bartholomew.

Soon, however, she was satisfied to convert these preparations into a means of returning courtesy for courtesy; and, inducing her brother to dismiss his troops, she thought only of giving the Adelantado a reception worthy of him and of herself.

Perhaps our readers will ask how an Indian queen could suc-

ceed in carrying out such an extensive programme. I will not send them to the huge volumes of Father Dutertre, in which they would find a detailed description for which I have no space; I will not even recall to them the fact that the festivals of civilized peoples, with their masks, their necklaces, ear-rings and bracelets, and disguises of every kind, are transparent imitations of the dress, the dances and the games of savages. I will only say to them: You know the word *enguirlander* (engarland) a Franco-Russian barbarism expressing the action of enticing a stranger. This barbarous metaphor was literally realized by Anacoana in her reception of Bartholomew.

The splendid flora of the Antilles was laid under a heavy contribution for the festival. In a sort of dramatic representation, the music and the verses of which were of her own composition, the Queen appeared surrounded by her nymphs, in a dress composed only of flowers, but so tastefully arranged as to put to shame the best artists of Seville or Burgos.

These childlike allurements were employed by Anacoana only in subordination to a loyal and noble policy. Before Bartholomew took leave of Behechio and his lovely sister, he had conceived for this New World Isabella the greatest confidence and esteem.

He had no fear, henceforward, of any attack from the region of Xaragua, and could turn his attention to the Vega Real, where Guarionex was in open rebellion. The misconduct of the Spaniards had converted this prince from a friend and ally to a bitter enemy.

The cacique was conquered and made prisoner, but restored to his subjects, at their earnest entreaties. Two chiefs lesser in rank were punished by death; as was also the perpetrator of the principal outrage which had driven Guarionex into rebellion. But the brilliant success of Bartholomew had stirred Roldan's bitterest jealousy. He

turned against his benefactor the arms which had been given him, together with his post as Chief Judge of the island; and when the Adelantado returned to Xaragua to receive the tribute and the fealty of Behechio, Roldan declared himself the friend of the Indians oppressed by Don Bartholomew, and gathered around him, under this pretext, their real and only tyrants.

At this moment arrived from Spain news most unfavorable to the Admiral. He was represented as in disgrace at Court; and, as a proof of this, it was alleged that the nomination of Bartholomew to the dignity of Adelantado had not been officially confirmed.

This was the condition of things when Bartholomew, informed of his brother's return, came to him to relate the bad news and to restore the government into his hands.

The Admiral's first measure was publicly to confirm all his brother's acts, and to condemn the course of Roldan; he wrote also to the disobedient Chief Judge a letter whose length precludes quotation; but I may say that it is incomprehensible how a man of honor could have resisted such an appeal.

But Roldan was only a man of cunning. He was little moved by the letter; but certain considerations suggested to him by the wise and faithful Carvajal were more potent with him. Carvajal had been represented to Columbus as a traitor; but the Admiral's generous heart never lost confidence in an officer until he had convicted him of foul dealing. The event justified his reliance upon Carvajal, as it had justified his reliance upon Guacanagari.

The Spanish officer knew how to manage Roldan, who only half believed in the Admiral's disgrace, and who finally suggested to Carvajal a sort of compromise, which Columbus, seeing the difficulties which surrounded him, was prudent enough to accept.

He then devoted to the duties of administration all the time which was not spent in repressing turbulence and revolt; exhibiting in everything an intelligence, an activity, a good nature, a mixture of kindness and firmness which would have conciliated any other men than the Spanish scum with whom he was almost entirely surrounded.

Before many months, he had won over Roldan to the side of order, and had repressed by his assistance various new outbreaks of turbulence. Forts and important constructions were rising under his orders. He had written to the Queen a letter, accompanied by a detailed narrative such as she loved, and by presents such as she had always graciously received. It was his opinion that the dues of the Crown collectable in the island, which were now, thanks to him, about sixty millions of francs yearly, would soon reach a sum ten times as great. This belief was strictly verified.

The reward of so much zeal and wisdom was that one day, as he was superintending the enlargement of Fort Conception, he received the following letter:

"Don Christopher Columbus, our Admiral of the Ocean Sea, we have commanded the bearer of these presents, Commander Francisco de Bobadilla, to say unto you certain things with which we have charged him. We pray you to put therein full faith and credence, and to act in consequence."

This letter was signed by the King and the Queen, and gave notice to the Admiral that Bobadilla, who had already installed himself in the governor's residence, cited him, Christopher Columbus, before a commission composed of the most disaffected and hostile elements in Isabella.

Columbus was then in good condition to resist such a mandate, which he might well consider as extorted by surprise. Guarionex,

Behechio, Guacanagari and all the Indian tribes, upon a word from him or a sign from Anacoana, would have come to his help against the new governor. The latter fully expected an armed resistance, and was greatly surprised when the Admiral presented himself before him, in the full consciousness of innocence and of good desert. The first act of his unworthy successor was to put him in irons.

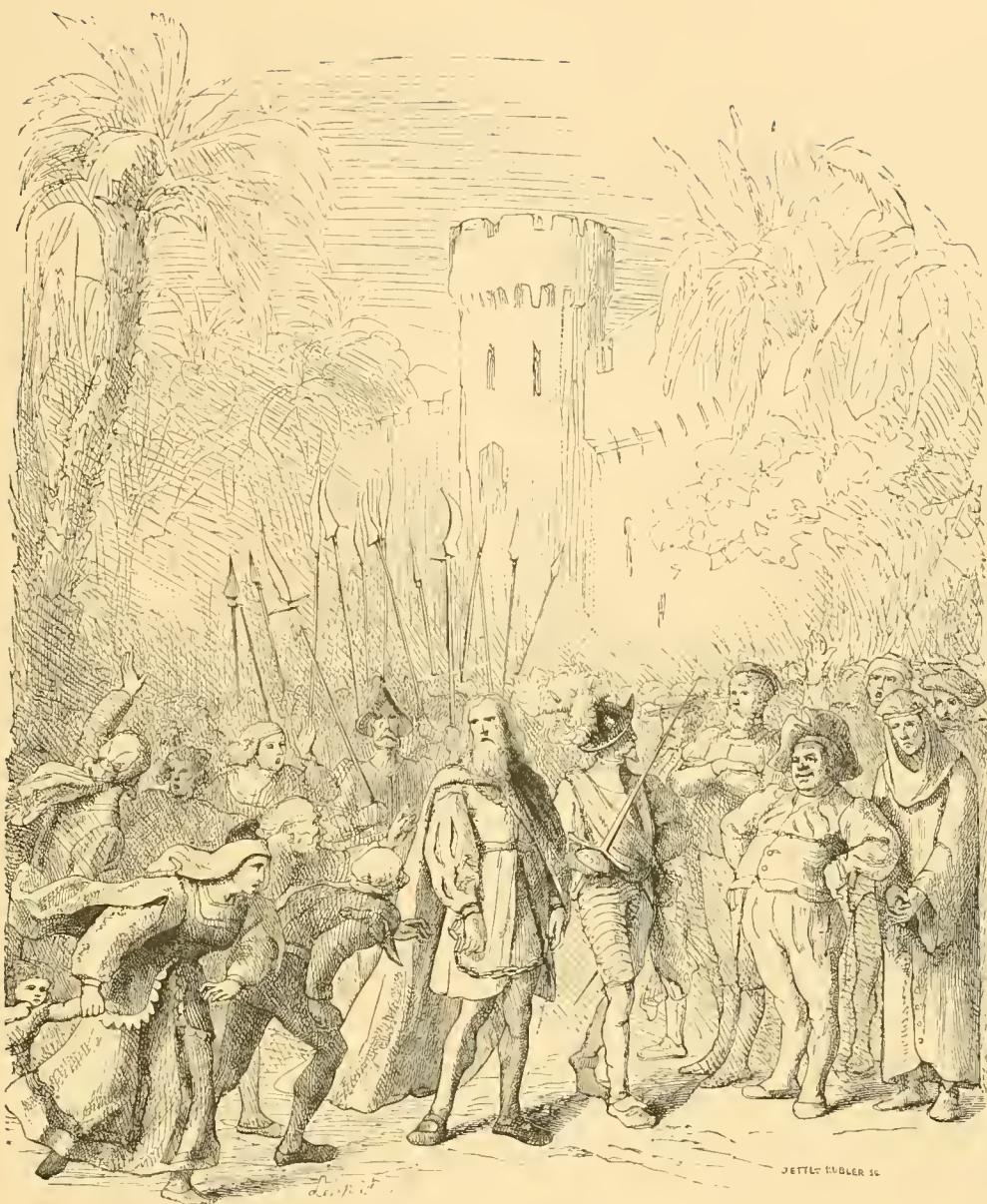
A pretended trial followed this disgraceful act; and after a month of rigorous captivity, Christopher Columbus—the discoverer of the New World,—separated from his two brothers, who were sent by another ship, sailed for Spain in fetters!



COLUMBUS IN FETTERS.



CHAPTER X.



HOOTED BY THE MOB.

CHAPTER X.

THE race of the Bobadillas is the same at all times and in all places. Its folly and lack of foresight equals its baseness and cruelty. He who put Christopher Columbus in chains doubtless never imagined

that, by a treatment so barbarous, he added to the glory of his victim a dramatic contrast well calculated to restore him to popularity. Still less did he suspect that the shackles with which he loaded the discoverer of the New World would chain himself forever to the hero's pedestal.

The smallest amount of common sense would have told him that all unnecessary harshness carries with it its own condemnation, and that a respectful intimation of the necessity of his return to Spain would have found Columbus as submissive as did the shameful fetters with which even his enemies blushed to see him loaded.

But anger and fear had so blinded this agent of bureaucratic spite that, when he heard the hooting with which the rabble hailed the departure of Columbus and his brothers in chains, he imagined that he had accomplished a great deed.

He was a Christian, and had heard the story of the Cross. When he saw, borne aloft in triumph, the Admiral's cook, the only man who could be found, in the absence of the hangman, base enough to rivet the irons on his master and benefactor, was he not reminded of Barabbas?

Scarcely, however, had the *Gorda* weighed anchor than a strong reaction in favor of the illustrious captive thrilled through the island. The few good men were horror-stricken; the rest were bewildered and vaguely appalled. The cruelty of Bobadilla was universally condemned.

Meanwhile, on board of the ship, the captain of the caravel, with a worthy pilot, named Andreas Martin, and the officer who had been obliged by his duty to arrest the Admiral, came to him and begged him to let them take off his irons.

Columbus could not but feel this mark of respectful sympathy;

but he refused the proffered alleviation as if he foresaw what a brightness these fetters would one day add to his glory. We know that, in after times, he wished to be buried with them.

It is not improbable, when we remember the sketch executed by Columbus which was mentioned in the first part of our story, that he anticipated the effect which would be produced by these chains alike upon his contemporaries and upon posterity. Another great Italian, in aftertimes, a poet not less careful of his future glory, similarly preferred a perpetual voluntary exile to a late return to his ungrateful country.

The analogy will not hold in all respects. Our hero's character was nobler than that of Dante Alighieri. Only the lance of Achilles could cure the wounds it had made; and the royal authority, which had inflicted such an injury on Columbus, could alone repair that injury.

So faithful a subject did not think himself justified in eluding any punishment, however unjust, which the authorized representative of his Sovereigns should pronounce against him.

His conduct seems also partly due to religious motives, to a feeling more solemn than care for his own glory, or even than the obedience due to kings. This ardent believer, who had, like his patron Saint Christopher, carried the true God over the waters, rejoiced still to bear, in the ignoble chains with which they had loaded his old age, the image of his crucified Lord.

This feeling animates his whole letter to his friend, the good Juana de la Torre, nurse of the late prince Don Juan. This random vindication of his conduct, which he drew up during the voyage, expresses not merely the proud resignation to his fate and the absolute confidence in God which lay at the foundation of his character:

as a document destined to meet the eye of the Queen, it anticipates and refutes objection, not indeed in consecutive order, but with a breadth and justness of vision of which the following passage will give some idea:

"I was not to be considered as an ordinary Governor, exercising his office in a town or province regularly administered, and in the enjoyment of laws which can be executed to the letter. I have a right to ask that I be judged as a captain, sent from Spain to the Indies to conquer a numerous and warlike people, differing from our own in religion and in manners, separated from each other by ranges of mountains, and without fixed points of reunion; for in the Indies there are neither towns nor political treaties." To this demand that his administration should be judged from the only true point of view Columbus might have added the fact that his system of punishment with regard to the natives was far from equalling in severity that which he found prevailing among the tribes themselves. For instance, to cite a single example, instead of the frightful torture of empalement, with which every petty theft was punished among them, he had substituted the branding used in similar cases in Spain, where it entailed a moral degradation the very notion of which was incomprehensible to savages. What mattered to them the good opinion of their conquerors, of men whom they had come to look upon as a horde of merciless plunderers?

As to the reduction of these savages to a state of temporary slavery, what other means of working the soil and the mines was left to him, between Spanish indolence on the one hand, and the insatiable greed of the exchequer on the other?

For the rest, while he had not the ideas of our time about slavery, Columbus personally held it in such dislike that he never

owned a single slave; while, as he might have remarked, some of his foremost accusers owned more than two hundred.

Finally, if the gift of prophecy had not deserted him, the great discoverer, who alone of the invaders had known how to make himself beloved among the natives, might have closed the debate by predicting that all his measures of colonial administration and police, so strongly blamed in 1500, would in 1510, with some changes in the direction of severity, constitute the legal code of these very Indies; and that by 1864 the most civilized and anti-slavery nations of Europe would almost have effected the extermination of the natives of the New World; to say nothing of Oceanica. And this they would have done in consequence of the harsh but inevitable law which offers to the inferior race only the alternative of assimilation or of death.

But, happily, Columbus had no need to justify his conduct; once again, it was only his enemies whom he had to defend. Nor did he fail them; for most of them owed the fulfilment of the contracts made with them only to his charitable intercession.

His second departure from Cadiz had been almost unnoticed; but deep and universal emotion greeted his return to the same post in a condition so unworthy of his fame. The chains he wore did not resound in vain on the stones of the old pier. Their echoes rolled through the heart of the nation, and reached the conscience of Isabella on her throne. From motives less delicate and more interested, Ferdinand seemed equally moved. He declared that his intentions had been misunderstood and his instructions outrageously overstepped. Fonseca himself confessed that his agent had gone too far, and the Navy Bureau affixed to Bobadilla's name the ominous epithet *overzealous*.

A year later, from these same registers, both epithet and name

were effaced. Bobadilla had been recalled to Spain, and had perished at sea, with a crew composed of the Admiral's bitterest enemies.

Miracles abound in the life of Columbus. It was a poem in action, where events unfolded themselves with a sequence and dramatic contrast unequalled in the compositions of art.



THE WELCOME OF THE QUEEN.

On receipt of the letter to Donna Juana de la Torre, a special courier had been dispatched to Columbus; he was awaited with pity and admiration.

He set off for Grenada, when the court was sitting; but, with the fine tact of a man who understood his extreme and delicate situation, he made the journey and appeared in the presence of the Two Kings not, as before, in the humble dress of a Franciscan, but as a great lord, an Admiral and Viceroy; with the brilliant dress and

assured bearing which befitted his rank, his dignity, his services and his character.

The king was the first to receive him. Little as he may have liked the bearing of Columbus, he let no sign of his feeling escape him.

But Isabella, when she saw the noble old man who had undergone such disgraceful treatment, was moved even to tears. She declared that all explanation must be preceded by the dismissal of Bobadilla and the confirmation of the Admiral in all his titles.

The moral reparation was complete; but there were obstacles to any immediate return to St. Domingo which Columbus well understood. He made no objection to the appointment of a temporary Governor; a Governor whom King Ferdinand in his heart designed to be a permanent officer; and on the ninth of May, 1502, he set off from Cadiz with four caravels and a hundred and fifty men, not as ruler of the Western Indies, but on another voyage of discovery. Nothing can be a better proof of his disinterestedness and his desire for active service in the cause of God and his fellow-men.

How strangely does time change our point of view! Columbus setting out modestly from Cadiz, with his four small ships, seems to posterity a greater man than when, but a short time before, he was deploying a great squadron in the same waters, amid the huzzas and the blessings of a nation.

But habit had long deadened in Columbus the apprehension of these contrasts. He regarded his actions from the stand-point of a future generation; and the deed for which he was now preparing bore to his eyes the same character of greatness in which it appears to posterity,

He intended to resume the exploration of the mainland, discovered by him on the first of August, 1498, and to reach either a strait

whose existence he suspected in the neighborhood of Honduras, or an open sea, over which he could accomplish the circumnavigation of the globe.

With this object in view, he took with him, not the troop of thieves and famished gold-seekers who encumbered his previous voyage, but sailors chosen, for the most part, for their courage and intelligence; and at the head of this picked company, his gallant brother Bartholomew, who commanded one of the three caravels.

On board of the chief galley, which he commanded in person, was his son and future historian Ferdinand.

We shall soon see for what a rough discipline he had torn this boy of thirteen from the soft and luxurious court of Spain; but whosoever desires to read the details of their common misfortunes on this unhappy voyage must seek them elsewhere. A full relation of Columbus' fourth voyage would not only lead us beyond the limits of our story, but would also transgress its object, by encroaching upon the history of the New World, when our object is only to relate its discovery, and to illustrate the character of the discoverer.

We shall give, therefore, only a summary of this grand but mournful expedition, which will bring into their proper connection and date the fragments of a letter written by the Admiral.

After the customary stop at the Canary Islands, the little squadron, with constantly favoring weather, arrived on the fifteenth of June at Martinique, and on the following days at Dominica, Santa Cruz and Porto Rico. At this point one of the caravels proved totally unfit for the voyage, and the Admiral, to make the necessary alterations in her, or to exchange her for one better suited to his purpose, steered for San Domingo, and, casting anchor in sight of Isabella, asked permission of the authorities to put in for repairs.

This permission would have been readily extended to the meanest pilot. It was refused to Columbus, the founder of that very city whose hospitality was denied him.

He took a characteristic revenge. He sent word to Ovando, the new Governor, that a fearful tempest was approaching, and entreated him not to allow the departure of a squadron on the eve of sailing for Spain. This squadron had on board the deposed Bobadilla and a number of discontented hidalgos, who were, notwithstanding their complaints, taking back great sums in gold to the mother country.

The Admiral's prediction was contemned. He set sail for a little harbor which he called Port Concealment; and saw the homeward-bound squadron set out in weather, apparently, as fair as could be wished.

Two days afterwards, it was shipwrecked; only one vessel escaped, and that the weakest. It is a curious circumstance that this vessel had on board all the little fortune of Columbus.

The Admiral did not learn this fact until long afterwards; he was even ignorant of the shipwreck, having enough to do to manage his own little fleet, which, in its insufficient shelter, had suffered heavily from the violence of the storm; and all this within a few miles of the broad harbor of Isabella! "What man," wrote he to the Two Kings, "what man, from Job himself to the present day, was ever more unfortunate than I! In the very ports which I had discovered at the peril of my life, I was now refused a shelter from the death which menaced my friends, my brother, my young son and myself."

His paternal love was destined to undergo still harsher proof; but amid all mishaps, his heart rejoiced to find in his child the soul of a man.

He was swept away towards the southern coast of Cuba by the equatorial current which he had discovered on his preceding voyage, and then was beaten about by a succession of storms. For twenty-four days his eyes saw neither the sun nor the stars. His ships were gaping open, his sails hanging in tatters; cordage, rigging, ship's boats all gone; his best sailors, sick and disheartened, had taken to their prayers; the boldest had lost heart. "But most grievous of all to me," he wrote to the Two Kings, "was the thought of my son, whose extreme youth was ill-fitted to bear such an extremity. Doubtless it was God, and none other, who bestowed on him such marvellous endurance. Of himself alone, he kept up the courage and patience of the sailors in their hard labors. He might have been a pilot grown old amid storms; a conduct most incredible, which softened the torments of my situation."

"And this is not all," he adds a little further on; "*a thought which draws my heart up through my body* is that I have left in Spain my youngest son Don Diego, poor and bereft of his father; but I hope that he will find in your Highnesses just and grateful princes, who will return to him with usury all of which your service has deprived him."

While he was pouring forth these touching complaints, Columbus was off the coast of the mainland, opposite Cape Honduras. A month afterwards, the fourteenth of September, he had explored the neighboring coasts as far as Cape Gracias a Dios, and two days later cast anchor near the mouth of a river, which the loss of a boat's crew caused him to name the River of Disaster.

The valuable information which he here received concerning the mineral wealth of the country was carefully detailed in his letters; but he made no delay in prosecuting the object of his voyage. In

his search for a strait, then non-existent, but which will yet be created by human hands, he surveyed in detail all the coasts of Costa Rica, of Veragua, of the Mosquitos and of the Isthmus of Panama.

This important scientific exploration was accomplished only in the teeth of human and elemental foes. In this harbor, to which, from its small size, he had given the name of *El Retrete* (The Cabinet) he had been forced to fire upon the Indians, who had been roused to fury by the misconduct of the crews; and soon after, the pressure brought to bear upon him by his men compelled him to return to a point on the sea-coast of Veragua. The proximity of gold mines almost induced him to establish a settlement in this region; but the opposition of his comrades, the hostility of the natives and the perpetual recurrence of bad weather forced him to abandon this project; and on the first of May, 1502, after having come upon the entrance to the Gulf of Darien—his last discovery—he reluctantly set sail for St. Domingo.

We shall now pass rapidly over a succession of calamities which would, if narrated in detail, but oppress the mind with a doleful monotony. It was only after repeated shocks of misfortune that Columbus thus poured forth his lamentations: "The prey of constant storms, tormented by fever and overcome by fatigue, all hope of deliverance had left my heart. Yet I armed myself with all my courage; I went up to the highest place, calling in vain upon the four winds of heaven for help. I saw your Majesties' captains of war weep around me. Exhausted, I fell into a deep sleep: In my slumber I heard a compassionate voice which thus addressed me:

"Thou fool, why art thou so slow to believe thy God, the God of the universe, and to do Him service? What more hath He done for Moses or for David than for thee? Did He not care for thee

tenderly in thy youth, and when thou wast old enough to work His will, did He not make the earth resound with thy name? Did He not give thee the Indies, that rich portion of the globe? did He not empower thee to bestow it upon others, according to thy pleasure? * * * Chains which none could break barred the gates of the Ocean; He put the keys thereof in thy hands. Thy power was recognized in the furthest lands, thy glory proclaimed by all Christians * * * Turn therefore to Him and acknowledge thy fault; for His mercy is infinite. Thine old age shall not prevent His bounty; He reserveth for thee a most glorious inheritance.

"Was not Abraham an hundred years old when Isaac was born unto him? Vain is the help for which thou callest; but the Lord keepeth His promise unto His servants: nor doth He, when He hath received a service, profess that His instructions have not been followed, and give a new meaning to His orders. * * * His words are never ambiguous; all that He hath promised He giveth with usury. This is what He hath done for thee; but show now, if thou canst, what recompense thou hast from others for thy life of danger and of hardship."

"And I, though cast down by woe, heard clearly all this speech; but having no strength to answer, I could but weep in humbleness over my faults. Then the voice said, *Take courage and hope; thy labours shall be graven on marble.*"

These passages, which for sublimity have been compared by good judges to the Scriptures, occur in the famous letter called, for more than one reason, *litera rarissima*. It was sent by the hands of savages; and arrived at its destination only by a miracle.

When Columbus wrote it, he had been forced, after thirteen months of hardship and misfortune, to run his two remaining ships

aground on the shore of Jamaica. The brave Diego Mendez and a Genoese of the noble house of the Fieschi had set off in an Indian



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canoe, to ask for help from St. Domingo; but no news had been received of them, and they were given up for lost.

Such a situation it seemed hardly possible to aggravate: yet at

this moment his crew broke out into a revolt in which his life was greatly endangered, and then abandoned him almost in a body, and spread themselves through the interior of the island, living by the strong hand; while the Indians, tired of supplying the foreigners' needs, undertook to reduce them to starvation

The near approach of this danger was met by Columbus with his old readiness of invention. He remembered that an eclipse of the moon was close at hand; and predicted to the rebellious savages that, in punishment for their behaviour, the moon would cease to give them light.

We can readily imagine the scene that followed. The disk of the moon was gradually darkened: the Indians gave themselves up for lost, and brought all they had to propitiate the terrible white man, who allowed himself to be persuaded by their entreaties, and commanded the moon to restore to them her light.

Another piece of good fortune was the receipt from St. Domingo of a little cask of wine and a side of bacon, with the promise that a vessel should soon be sent to his succor.

This was all, for the time, which could be obtained from that Ovando who had refused to Columbus an entry into the port of Isabella.

The promised ship came duly to their help; but the politic Ovando, as we shall see, had lost no time in putting himself into condition to receive the Admiral and his brother in a safe and befitting manner.

Our readers will remember the visits of Don Bartholomew to Anacoana, and the lively sympathy which existed between that princess and the Columbus family; and they may conclude that the jealous Roldan had disclosed this alliance to Ovando, who at first attached



THE DEATH OF COLUMBUS

but little importance to it; but the approach of the brothers and the necessity of receiving them with courtesy inspired the crafty Governor with an undefined fear of some conspiracy, which he must anticipate and prevent.

With this object, and unwilling to keep such guests as the Admiral and the Adelantado longer in waiting, he went with his soldiers to Xaragua, with the avowed intention of entertaining Anacoana by a tournament. She was sitting as a spectator, with all her attendants and the principal chiefs of the country, and the display had but just begun, when the knights and soldiery of Ovando, with the Governor himself at their head, threw themselves upon the unarmed Indians, and began a frightful butchery. Eighty-four of the caciques were burned alive; and nothing but ashes remained on the spot where rose, the day before, the smiling capital of Xaragua.

The noble Queen, after the farce of a trial conducted under the forms of law, was ignominiously hanged in the public square of Isabella.

Such was the end of the Flower of Gold, of the beautiful Queen Anacoana, called the Friend of the Spaniards.

While these horrors were taking place in the New World, another Queen, afflicted by the death of all she held dear, was drawing near her end; and with her were to be buried the last hopes of Columbus.

When he returned to Spain, the health of Isabella was so far gone that she could render him no assistance either in his projects, or in securing the recognition of his rights.

He himself was stopped at Seville by an acute attack of the rheumatism from which he had suffered for many years, and which was now so aggravated by age and by his recent hardships as to

keep him prisoner on the pallet of an inn; while his ardent imagination showed him his enemies at the King's ear, with no good angel by to plead for him.

Yet Isabella was still alive, and wished to the last to help her venerable servant. A messenger from the Admiral, the faithful Diego Mendez, was admitted to her presence. From her bed of suffering she listened with a favoring ear to the story of Columbus, she learned what had been done in her colonies by the Fonsecas, the Bobadillas and the Ovandos; she wept over the woful end of the noble and charming Anacoana; she promised that her death should be avenged, and swore that the murderer should have at her hands "a place he had never yet filled."

The Queen's countenance was the last consolation which Columbus was to receive on this side of the grave. His health did not permit him to avail himself of her favor, in pleading his cause before the King, until his noble friend could no longer intercede for him on earth.

Isabella breathed her last on the twenty sixth of November, 1504, and from the day of this irreparable loss, Columbus received from Ferdinand only dilatory promises, empty marks of honor, and the ostentatious consideration accorded to his old age and feeble condition.

His mind was as vigorous as ever; but hardship and cold, deprivation of necessaries, and above all the constant deception and disappointment of his hopes, hastened the end of a life which could do humanity no further service.

Eighteen months were yet to elapse before, in the dispensation of Providence, outrunning the slowness of human justice, the discoverer of the New World was to yield up his spirit to the Creator of all things

Lying in a poor inn at Seville, on May the twentieth, 1506, Columbus felt that his last hour was approaching. He asked for the last sacraments, which he wished to receive, as his mistress Isabella had received them, in the dress of the order of St. Francis.

It was on Ascension Day that his spirit was set free. At noon, after some hours of suffering, he uttered aloud the last words of the dying Saviour on the cross:

"In manus tuas, Domine, commendō spiritum meum."—"Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my soul."

And, with these words, he expired.

Columbus disappeared from this world almost as obscurely as he entered it; and the principal cause of this was in the immense revolution brought about by himself. Such was the impulse which he gave to voyages of discovery that, in less than forty-five years, the coast-line of North and South America was tolerably well known; while, in the interior, great empires had been conquered. It was natural that, in the midst of such a movement, the rumor of Columbus' death should have been stifled, both in the Old and the New World, by the resonance of his mighty deeds. Seven years later, the poets were still celebrating the great discoverer as a living man; even in Spain, many were first informed of his death by the splendid though tardy obsequies offered to his memory by King Ferdinand.

Buried at first in the Franciscan convent at Valladolid, the body of Columbus was transported to Seville, and laid, with a pompous

funeral service, in the Carthusian monastery of Santa Maria, where it remained till 1536. It was then reclaimed by the Capital of St. Domingo, and was laid in the cathedral of that city. There it remained till 1795, when St. Domingo was conquered from Spain by the French. The dispossessed Spaniards carried the precious remains away with them to Cuba. Perhaps they have not yet made their last journey.

The posterity of Columbus, during the short period of its existence, proved itself not unworthy of its great ancestor. His eyes were hardly closed when his son Diego, on whom he had entailed his estate, was put in possession of some small part of his father's property. Soon afterwards, he married Donna Maria de Toledo, the favorite niece of the Duke of Alba, and, thanks to this almost regal alliance, was at length sent to replace the traitor Ovando as governor of St. Domingo. There, under the guidance of his uncles Bartholomew and Diego, he carried out his father's designs, and rendered to his sovereign services repaid by similar ingratititude.

Like his father, he was recalled to Spain to give an account of his acts; like him, he was found innocent; like him, he ended his days in the mother country, disgusted with the ingratitude of Kings.

A few years before his death died also, in St. Domingo, Bartholomew and Diego, the Admiral's brothers. Bartholomew had been created Governor of the Island of Mona. They left no posterity; nor did Ferdinand Columbus, who died in 1593, leaving behind him a distinguished reputation as an historian and geographer, and the most authentic biography of his father.

Diego Columbus, the Admiral's eldest son, had by Donna Maria de Toledo five children, the eldest of whom, Don Luiz, obtained in

1537 the title of Duke of Veragua and Marquis of Jamaica, with a grant of twenty-five leagues square of land.

The legitimate male line of Christopher Columbus expired in 1578, in the person of the fourth Admiral to whom descended that illustrious name; but the title of Duke of Veragua is still borne with distinction by a collateral branch of the Columbus family.

